**TIME ALONE WITH GOD**

Ingredients:

* Half an hour, every day.
* Quiet, so you focus on yourself and on God;
* Prayer, worship, thanksgiving, as your response to God
* Word, so you can ponder His truth
* Life, people and events, so you are aware of Him in these situations

Method:

* Time – a fixed time when you are unlikely to be interrupted is best but more important is to actually start having such a time with God.
* Quiet – A simple method is to be quiet until you are aware you are in God’s presence before you start to respond to Him.
* Word – Read and be familiar with what is said. Meditate on the Word: “What does it say?” “What does it mean?” “How should I respond?” You may use the questions to help you or set them aside.
* Life – Use the time to also be aware of the things that are happening, inside you and around you. Bring these before God and speak to Him.

# Monday and Tuesday

[**DANIEL 2:1-12**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel+2&version=NIV)

Remember this is your time alone with God. It is a time to tell God what is on your mind (thinking back over the past day), listen to him speak to you (reading and meditating on a bible passage), and finally, to respond to him (prayer). The questions are there to help you do this. Ignore them if they do not help. If your time is limited, I suggest that you don’t do everything in one go but spread them over the two days.

1. Take time to be quiet so you can focus on your time alone with God. Recall and briefly write down any significant things that happened or occupied you the past day. Share with God what you thought or felt. Pray also for those he has laid on your heart.
2. Read [DANIEL 2:1-12](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel+2&version=NIV). Write down what you think the passage is about and what it says to you. Feel free to use the questions in “Further Thoughts” to help you think over the text.
3. What is God saying to you? Write down a prayer in response.

**Further Thoughts**

1. Summarise the situation as told in today’s passage. What details impress you (if any)?
2. Do you think God was behind this development? Why?
3. Dreams are a common way for God to communicate with man in biblical times. Jacob had a dream and so did Joseph, Jesus’ father. Do you think God continues to communicate with us through dreams? Why? Do you think God communicates with you personally (that is, specific to your context) or only through what has been already said in the Scriptures? Again, why?

# Wednesday and Thursday

[**DANIEL 2:13-23**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel+2&version=NIV)

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1. Take time to be quiet so you can focus on your time alone with God. Recall and briefly write down any significant things that happened or occupied you the past day. Share with God what you thought or felt. Pray also for those he has laid on your heart.
2. Read [DANIEL 2:13-23](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel+2&version=NIV). Write down what you think the passage is about and what it says to you. Feel free to use the questions in “Further Thoughts” to help you think over the text.
3. What is God saying to you? Write down a prayer in response.

**Further Thoughts**

1. Daniel and his friends were counted among the wise men who were ordered to be executed for failing to tell the king his dreams and interpret them. How did Daniel respond to this development?
2. Why would the king grant Daniel’s request for an extension of time?
3. What do you think of the fact that Daniel shared with his friends and asked them to pray? Do you think this is significant? What do you think of the fact that Daniel’s actions were described as “with tact and wisdom”? Do you think this is significant?
4. It would seem likely that the dreams were initiated by God as no one else would be able to tell the future. Do you think Daniel’s tact, Daniel’s initiative to seek to understand what was going on and to seek for an opportunity to answer the King (even though at that point he had no answers), Daniel and his friends’ prayers, made any difference? Who would you praise, Daniel for his actions or God for sharing with Daniel the knowledge he needed to save the day? Why?
5. How did Daniel praise God? What is Daniel’s God like, that he (Daniel) would even dare to offer to the King answers he did not already know? What about you? How would you praise your God? What is your God like?

# Friday and Saturday

[**DANIEL 2:24-49**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel+1&version=NIV)

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1. Take time to be quiet so you can focus on your time alone with God. Recall and briefly write down any significant things that happened or occupied you the past day. Share with God what you thought or felt. Pray also for those he has laid on your heart.
2. Read [DANIEL 2:24-49](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel+1&version=NIV). Write down what you think the passage is about and what it says to you. Feel free to use the questions in “Further Thoughts” to help you think over the text.
3. What is God saying to you? Write down a prayer in response.

**Further Thoughts**

1. *“No wise man, enchanter, magician or diviner can explain to the king the mystery he has asked about, but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries. He has shown King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in days to come.”* What do you think of Daniel’s response to the King’s question? Do you think such “tact and wisdom” were naturally a part of Daniel or came from God?
2. *“As Your Majesty was lying there, your mind turned to things to come, and the revealer of mysteries showed you what is going to happen. As for me, this mystery has been revealed to me, not because I have greater wisdom than anyone else alive, but so that Your Majesty may know the interpretation and that you may understand what went through your mind.”* Do you think that God intended to reveal these mysteries to the King, or to Daniel, or to all who would read the Scriptures?
3. *“The dream is true and its interpretation is trustworthy.”* For us on this side of the Cross, we know that the Rock is Jesus and the kingdom is the Kingdom of God. This was Daniel’s interpretation thousands of years ago. The dream is true and the interpretation is trustworthy because there is no way Daniel would know except that it was revealed to him. How does this appeal to you?
4. *Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell prostrate before Daniel and paid him honor and ordered that an offering and incense be presented to him. The king said to Daniel, “Surely your God is the God of gods and the Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, for you were able to reveal this mystery.”* It is interesting that while Daniel told the king that God (the revealer of mysteries) had shown him (“Your Majesty, you are the king of kings”) what is to come, yet it was the king who fell prostrate before Daniel. Why did the king respond in such a way? What do you think of King Nebuchadnezzar from what you know in these two chapters?
5. *“Surely your God is the God of gods and the Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, for you were able to reveal this mystery.”* Note that the king did not throw away his own gods and worship Daniel’s God. The net result was that Daniel’s God was honoured and Daniel and his friends became some of the most influential men in Babylon. Do you think this was a sufficient result in God’s eyes? Do you think God desires to put those who obey him with “tact and wisdom” in places of influence in the world? What do you think of God’s attitude towards the world and his interactions with it? What is your ambition towards the world?

# Sunday

##### THE GOD OF HEAVEN

It is interesting that Daniel calls God, “the God of Heaven”, now that Israel is no more. Built into this vision of the pre-eminent God over all of Creation is a God who has authority over time, nature and earthly power structures (“He changes times and seasons; he deposes kings and raises up others.”) The God of Daniel does not confine himself to Israel but is involved in the affairs of the world.

In hindsight, it is natural that at this time, when Israel has been allowed to be dismantled, that God would reveal his long game: the Kingdom of God. It is significant, I think, that this truth of an eternal kingdom that is to come is revealed to a Gentile king and comprehended by a Jewish man of God.

As Daniel pointed out, no one can know unless the God of Heaven reveals. The dream and the interpretation was done in such a way that there would be no doubt that this indeed is the mystery from God and revealed by him. At the end, Daniel was comfortable to declare, “The great God has shown the king what will take place in the future. The dream is true and its interpretation is trustworthy.”

Yet it is Christians like us that fully grasp the immensity of this revelation: A rock will smash to pieces the systems that control and shape the world, and bring them to an end, and establish a kingdom that will last forever—a rock cut out of a mountain, but not by human hands—a rock that broke the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold to pieces. What a tremendous description of our Lord and Saviour.

In the face of the God of Heaven, King Nebuchadnezzar fell prostrate and gave honour to Daniel, as the representative of the God of Heaven. How would you respond, you who know and understand even more, and better?

*“Surely your God is the God of gods and the Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, for you were able to reveal this mystery.”*

1. Review the answers/thoughts you wrote down in the past week. Read the short sharing above. Does it add anything to your own thoughts?
2. What is God saying to you? Write down a prayer in response.