



# OCTOBER 17

## GCC 2021 READING PLAN

I Kings 20  
I Thessalonians 3  
Daniel 2

**PRAY:**

*Father show us who you are. Show us your person, your power, your purposes. Overwhelm us with a knowledge of you that penetrates our minds and imbeds itself in the deepest recesses of our hearts. Let this knowledge so change our hearts that it results in our lives being lived in light of who you are, what you have done and what you say is true about us in Jesus Christ.*

Notes  
Thoughts  
Questions:



**AS YOU READ THROUGH TODAY'S PASSAGES REFLECT ON THESE QUESTIONS:**

**What are some things revealed in these passages about the person and character of God? Who is he? What is he like?**

**What are some things that God has done to reveal who he is?**

**Who are you in light of God's work? What is it that God is saying about you?**

**How should knowing who God is, what he has done and what he says about you change how you live?**



## Ahab's Wars with Syria

**20** Ben-hadad the king of Syria gathered all his army together. Thirty-two kings were with him, and horses and chariots. And he went up and closed in on Samaria and fought against it. <sup>2</sup> And he sent messengers into the city to Ahab king of Israel and said to him, "Thus says Ben-hadad: <sup>3</sup> 'Your silver and your gold are mine; your best wives and children also are mine.' " <sup>4</sup> And the king of Israel answered, "As you say, my lord, O king, I am yours, and all that I have." <sup>5</sup> The messengers came again and said, "Thus says Ben-hadad: 'I sent to you, saying, "Deliver to me your silver and your gold, your wives and your children.'" <sup>6</sup> Nevertheless I will send my servants to you tomorrow about this time, and they shall search your house and the houses of your servants and lay hands on whatever pleases you and take it away.' "

<sup>7</sup> Then the king of Israel called all the elders of the land and said, "Mark, now, and see how this man is seeking trouble, for he sent to me for my wives and my children, and for my silver and my gold, and I did not refuse him." <sup>8</sup> And all the elders and all the people said to him, "Do not listen or consent." <sup>9</sup> So he said to the messengers of Ben-hadad, "Tell my lord the king, 'All that you first demanded of your servant I will do, but this thing I cannot do.' " And the messengers departed and brought him word again. <sup>10</sup> Ben-hadad sent to him and said, "The gods do so to me and more also, if the dust of Samaria shall suffice for handfuls for all the people who follow me." <sup>11</sup> And the king of Israel answered, "Tell him, 'Let not him who straps on his armor boast himself as he who takes it off.' " <sup>12</sup> When Ben-hadad heard this message as he was drinking with the kings in the booths, he said to his men, "Take your positions." And they took their positions against the city.

## Ahab Defeats Ben-hadad

<sup>13</sup> And behold, a prophet came near to Ahab king of Israel and said, "Thus says the LORD, Have you seen all this great multitude? Behold, I will give it into your hand this day, and you shall know that I am the LORD." <sup>14</sup> And Ahab said, "By whom?" He said, "Thus says the LORD, By the servants of the governors of the districts." Then he said, "Who shall begin the battle?" He answered, "You." <sup>15</sup> Then he mustered the servants of the governors of the districts, and they were 232. And after them he mustered all the people of Israel, seven thousand.

<sup>16</sup> And they went out at noon, while Ben-hadad was drinking himself drunk in the booths, he and the thirty-two kings who helped him. <sup>17</sup> The servants of the governors of the districts went out first. And Ben-hadad sent out scouts, and they reported to him, "Men are coming out from Samaria." <sup>18</sup> He said, "If they have come out for peace, take them alive. Or if they have come out for war, take them alive."

<sup>19</sup> So these went out of the city, the servants of the governors of the districts and the army that followed them. <sup>20</sup> And each struck down his man. The Syrians fled, and Israel pursued

them, but Ben-hadad king of Syria escaped on a horse with horsemen. <sup>21</sup> And the king of Israel went out and struck the horses and chariots, and struck the Syrians with a great blow.

<sup>22</sup> Then the prophet came near to the king of Israel and said to him, "Come, strengthen yourself, and consider well what you have to do, for in the spring the king of Syria will come up against you."

<sup>23</sup> And the servants of the king of Syria said to him, "Their gods are gods of the hills, and so they were stronger than we. But let us fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they. <sup>24</sup> And do this: remove the kings, each from his post, and put commanders in their places, <sup>25</sup> and muster an army like the army that you have lost, horse for horse, and chariot for chariot. Then we will fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they." And he listened to their voice and did so.

### **Ahab Defeats Ben-hadad Again**

<sup>26</sup> In the spring, Ben-hadad mustered the Syrians and went up to Aphek to fight against Israel. <sup>27</sup> And the people of Israel were mustered and were provisioned and went against them. The people of Israel encamped before them like two little flocks of goats, but the Syrians filled the country. <sup>28</sup> And a man of God came near and said to the king of Israel, "Thus says the LORD, 'Because the Syrians have said, "The LORD is a god of the hills but he is not a god of the valleys," therefore I will give all this great multitude into your hand, and you shall know that I am the LORD.' " <sup>29</sup> And they encamped opposite one another seven days. Then on the seventh day the battle was joined. And the people of Israel struck down of the Syrians 100,000 foot soldiers in one day. <sup>30</sup> And the rest fled into the city of Aphek, and the wall fell upon 27,000 men who were left.

Ben-hadad also fled and entered an inner chamber in the city. <sup>31</sup> And his servants said to him, "Behold now, we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel are merciful kings. Let us put sackcloth around our waists and ropes on our heads and go out to the king of Israel. Perhaps he will spare your life." <sup>32</sup> So they tied sackcloth around their waists and put ropes on their heads and went to the king of Israel and said, "Your servant Ben-hadad says, 'Please, let me live.' " And he said, "Does he still live? He is my brother." <sup>33</sup> Now the men were watching for a sign, and they quickly took it up from him and said, "Yes, your brother Ben-hadad." Then he said, "Go and bring him." Then Ben-hadad came out to him, and he caused him to come up into the chariot. <sup>34</sup> And Ben-hadad said to him, "The cities that my father took from your father I will restore, and you may establish bazaars for yourself in Damascus, as my father did in Samaria." And Ahab said, "I will let you go on these terms." So he made a covenant with him and let him go.

### **A Prophet Condemns Ben-hadad's Release**

<sup>35</sup> And a certain man of the sons of the prophets said to his fellow at the command of the LORD, "Strike me, please." But the man refused to strike him. <sup>36</sup> Then he said to him, "Because you have not obeyed the voice of the LORD, behold, as soon as you have gone from me, a lion

shall strike you down.” And as soon as he had departed from him, a lion met him and struck him down. <sup>37</sup> Then he found another man and said, “Strike me, please.” And the man struck him—struck him and wounded him. <sup>38</sup> So the prophet departed and waited for the king by the way, disguising himself with a bandage over his eyes. <sup>39</sup> And as the king passed, he cried to the king and said, “Your servant went out into the midst of the battle, and behold, a soldier turned and brought a man to me and said, ‘Guard this man; if by any means he is missing, your life shall be for his life, or else you shall pay a talent of silver.’” <sup>40</sup> And as your servant was busy here and there, he was gone.” The king of Israel said to him, “So shall your judgment be; you yourself have decided it.” <sup>41</sup> Then he hurried to take the bandage away from his eyes, and the king of Israel recognized him as one of the prophets. <sup>42</sup> And he said to him, “Thus says the LORD, ‘Because you have let go out of your hand the man whom I had devoted to destruction, therefore your life shall be for his life, and your people for his people.’” <sup>43</sup> And the king of Israel went to his house vexed and sullen and came to Samaria.

Notes

Thoughts

Questions:



## I THESSALONIANS 3

**3** Therefore when we could bear it no longer, we were willing to be left behind at Athens alone, <sup>2</sup> and we sent Timothy, our brother and God’s coworker in the gospel of Christ, to establish and exhort you in your faith, <sup>3</sup> that no one be moved by these afflictions. For you yourselves know that we are destined for this. <sup>4</sup> For when we were with you, we kept telling you beforehand that we were to suffer affliction, just as it has come to pass, and just as you know. <sup>5</sup> For this reason, when I could bear it no longer, I sent to learn about your faith, for fear that somehow the tempter had tempted you and our labor would be in vain.

### Timothy’s Encouraging Report

<sup>6</sup> But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and has brought us the good news of your faith and love and reported that you always remember us kindly and long to see us, as we long to see you— <sup>7</sup> for this reason, brothers, in all our distress and affliction we have been comforted about you through your faith. <sup>8</sup> For now we live, if you are standing fast in the Lord. <sup>9</sup> For what thanksgiving can we return to God for you, for all the joy that we feel for your sake before our God, <sup>10</sup> as we pray most earnestly night and day that we may see you face to face and supply what is lacking in your faith?

<sup>11</sup> Now may our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way to you, <sup>12</sup> and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you, <sup>13</sup> so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.



### Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

**2** In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; his spirit was troubled, and his sleep left him. <sup>2</sup> Then the king commanded that the magicians, the enchanters, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans be summoned to tell the king his dreams. So they came in and stood before the king. <sup>3</sup> And the king said to them, "I had a dream, and my spirit is troubled to know the dream." <sup>4</sup> Then the Chaldeans said to the king in Aramaic, "O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation." <sup>5</sup> The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, "The word from me is firm: if you do not make known to me the dream and its interpretation, you shall be torn limb from limb, and your houses shall be laid in ruins. <sup>6</sup> But if you show the dream and its interpretation, you shall receive from me gifts and rewards and great honor. Therefore show me the dream and its interpretation." <sup>7</sup> They answered a second time and said, "Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will show its interpretation." <sup>8</sup> The king answered and said, "I know with certainty that you are trying to gain time, because you see that the word from me is firm— <sup>9</sup> if you do not make the dream known to me, there is but one sentence for you. You have agreed to speak lying and corrupt words before me till the times change. Therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that you can show me its interpretation." <sup>10</sup> The Chaldeans answered the king and said, "There is not a man on earth who can meet the king's demand, for no great and powerful king has asked such a thing of any magician or enchanter or Chaldean. <sup>11</sup> The thing that the king asks is difficult, and no one can show it to the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh."

<sup>12</sup> Because of this the king was angry and very furious, and commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be destroyed. <sup>13</sup> So the decree went out, and the wise men were about to be killed; and they sought Daniel and his companions, to kill them. <sup>14</sup> Then Daniel replied with prudence and discretion to Arioch, the captain of the king's guard, who had gone out to kill the wise men of Babylon. <sup>15</sup> He declared to Arioch, the king's captain, "Why is the decree of the king so urgent?" Then Arioch made the matter known to Daniel. <sup>16</sup> And Daniel went in and requested the king to appoint him a time, that he might show the interpretation to the king.

### God Reveals Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

<sup>17</sup> Then Daniel went to his house and made the matter known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, <sup>18</sup> and told them to seek mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery, so that Daniel and his companions might not be destroyed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. <sup>19</sup> Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. <sup>20</sup> Daniel answered and said:

"Blessed be the name of God forever and ever,

to whom belong wisdom and might.

<sup>21</sup> He changes times and seasons;  
he removes kings and sets up kings;  
he gives wisdom to the wise  
and knowledge to those who have understanding;

<sup>22</sup> he reveals deep and hidden things;  
he knows what is in the darkness,  
and the light dwells with him.

<sup>23</sup> To you, O God of my fathers,  
I give thanks and praise,  
for you have given me wisdom and might,  
and have now made known to me what we asked of you,  
for you have made known to us the king's matter."

<sup>24</sup> Therefore Daniel went in to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon. He went and said thus to him: "Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon; bring me in before the king, and I will show the king the interpretation."

<sup>25</sup> Then Arioch brought in Daniel before the king in haste and said thus to him: "I have found among the exiles from Judah a man who will make known to the king the interpretation."

<sup>26</sup> The king declared to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, "Are you able to make known to me the dream that I have seen and its interpretation?" <sup>27</sup> Daniel answered the king and said, "No wise men, enchanters, magicians, or astrologers can show to the king the mystery that the king has asked, <sup>28</sup> but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and he has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days. Your dream and the visions of your head as you lay in bed are these: <sup>29</sup> To you, O king, as you lay in bed came thoughts of what would be after this, and he who reveals mysteries made known to you what is to be. <sup>30</sup> But as for me, this mystery has been revealed to me, not because of any wisdom that I have more than all the living, but in order that the interpretation may be made known to the king, and that you may know the thoughts of your mind.

### **Daniel Interprets the Dream**

<sup>31</sup> "You saw, O king, and behold, a great image. This image, mighty and of exceeding brightness, stood before you, and its appearance was frightening. <sup>32</sup> The head of this image was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its middle and thighs of bronze, <sup>33</sup> its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. <sup>34</sup> As you looked, a stone was cut out by no human

hand, and it struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. <sup>35</sup> Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold, all together were broken in pieces, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, so that not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

<sup>36</sup> "This was the dream. Now we will tell the king its interpretation. <sup>37</sup> You, O king, the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, and the might, and the glory, <sup>38</sup> and into whose hand he has given, wherever they dwell, the children of man, the beasts of the field, and the birds of the heavens, making you rule over them all—you are the head of gold. <sup>39</sup> Another kingdom inferior to you shall arise after you, and yet a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth. <sup>40</sup> And there shall be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron, because iron breaks to pieces and shatters all things. And like iron that crushes, it shall break and crush all these. <sup>41</sup> And as you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom, but some of the firmness of iron shall be in it, just as you saw iron mixed with the soft clay. <sup>42</sup> And as the toes of the feet were partly iron and partly clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly brittle. <sup>43</sup> As you saw the iron mixed with soft clay, so they will mix with one another in marriage, but they will not hold together, just as iron does not mix with clay. <sup>44</sup> And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever, <sup>45</sup> just as you saw that a stone was cut from a mountain by no human hand, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. A great God has made known to the king what shall be after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation sure."

### **Daniel Is Promoted**

<sup>46</sup> Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face and paid homage to Daniel, and commanded that an offering and incense be offered up to him. <sup>47</sup> The king answered and said to Daniel, "Truly, your God is God of gods and Lord of kings, and a revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this mystery." <sup>48</sup> Then the king gave Daniel high honors and many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon. <sup>49</sup> Daniel made a request of the king, and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego over the affairs of the province of Babylon. But Daniel remained at the king's court.



**JOURNAL A PRAYER TO THE LORD FROM YOUR READING TODAY.**