



WHO'S IN CHARGE HERE?

• THRONE • WARS



S E R I E S G U I D E



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How to Use This Guide

Our hope is that each week you will bring this guide with you. It's a way to dive deeper into the sermon through studying the passage before service, taking notes and reflections during the service, then using the questions to discuss the sermon with your community group.

It's a way to keep your group in sync, help you unlock new riches of God's word, and help you focus on what the Spirit may be calling you to do this week. We've also added some space for a prayer journal. Use this journal in your community group to remember and pray for your group throughout the week, or use it for other friends and family at Bethany.

As we study God's word, our love for Christ grows greater each day. This is just another simple tool to help you study God's word in new and God-honoring ways, as well as to connect to Scripture together with your community group.

WEEK 1

Kingdom Devotion

Daniel 1

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Week 1

DANIEL 1

¹In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. ²And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the vessels of the house of God. And he brought them to the land of Shinar, to the house of his god, and placed the vessels in the treasury of his god. ³Then the king commanded Ashpenaz, his chief eunuch, to bring some of the people of Israel, both of the royal family and of the nobility, ⁴youths without blemish, of good appearance and skillful in all wisdom, endowed with knowledge, understanding learning, and competent to stand in the king's palace, and to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans. ⁵The king assigned them a daily portion of the food that the king ate, and of the wine that he drank. They were to be educated for three years, and at the end of that time they were to stand before the king. ⁶Among these were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah of the tribe of Judah. ⁷And the chief of the eunuchs gave them names: Daniel he called Belteshazzar, Hananiah he called Shadrach, Mishael he called Meshach, and Azariah he called Abednego. ⁸But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the king's food, or with the wine that he drank. Therefore he asked the chief of the eunuchs to allow him not to defile himself. ⁹And God gave Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the chief of the eunuchs, ¹⁰and the chief of the eunuchs said to Daniel, "I fear my lord the king, who assigned your food and your drink; for why should he see that you were in worse condition than the youths who are of your own age? So you would endanger my head with the king." ¹¹Then Daniel said to the steward whom the chief of the eunuchs had assigned over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, ¹²"Test your servants for ten days; let us be given vegetables to eat and water to drink. ¹³Then let our appearance and the appearance of the youths who eat the king's food be observed by you, and deal with your servants according to what you see." [Continued]

Week 1: Discussion Questions

Icebreaker Question:

Have you ever had to refuse to eat at someone's house before (or wanted to)? What was the result?

Discussion Questions:

Why is it important to understand God's sovereignty even in the midst of defeat or hard times? Do you think it's strange that God lets vessels from His house be taken?

What do you think it was like for Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah to be given new names, a new language, new customs, and a new land? What is the significance of the changes to their names?

In what ways does Daniel show a willingness to obey God rather than men? In what ways is Daniel respectful in his disobedience? Do you think that helped or hurt his cause?

Application Questions:

Are their times or places in your life where you struggle to see God's sovereignty at work? Why or why not?

What are some ways that we can maintain biblical convictions in the midst of a world that is hostile to us?

How would your life look different if you fully trusted in God's sovereignty?

Week 2

Kingdom Nightmares

Daniel 2:1-30

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Week 2

DANIEL 2:1-30

¹In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; his spirit was troubled, and his sleep left him. ²Then the king commanded that the magicians, the enchanter, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans be summoned to tell the king his dreams. So they came in and stood before the king. ³And the king said to them, "I had a dream, and my spirit is troubled to know the dream." ⁴Then the Chaldeans said to the king in Aramaic, "O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation." ⁵The 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. ⁶But 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." ⁷They answered a second time and said, "Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will show its interpretation." ⁸The 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— ⁹if 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." ¹⁰The 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. ¹¹The 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." ¹²Because of this the king was angry and very furious, and commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be destroyed. ¹³So the decree went out, and the wise men were about to be killed; and they sought Daniel and his companions, to kill them. ¹⁴Then Daniel replied with prudence and discretion to Arioch [Continued]



Week 2: Discussion Questions

Icebreaker Question:

Have you ever had an interesting or troubling dream that you still remember? What are your dreams normally like?

Discussion Questions:

Why didn't the king trust the counselors to interpret his dream without first telling them the dream? Why did the king think they would speak "lying and corrupt words"? In what ways has "religion" and "fake spiritual truth" turned people away from real spiritual truth today?

What were Daniel's first actions after hearing the predicament he was in? What two things did he do that are instructive for us today?

What key ideas do you see in Daniel's prayer of thanksgiving in today's passage? What does He say about God? (v20-23)

Application Questions:

Why does Daniel begin his remarks with "there is a God in heaven"? Why did Daniel go out of his way to make sure the king knew the answers and the interpretation were from God? (v30)

When you face hardship in your life what are your default reactions? How can we model Daniel's reaction of seeking community and prayer in the midst of our need?

What do your prayers of thanksgiving look like to God? In what ways do your prayers mirror what Daniel said in this passage after his prayer was answered? In what ways could they mirror it better?

Week 3

Kingdom Security

Daniel 2:31-49

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Week 3

DANIEL 2:31-49

³¹“You saw, O king, and behold, a great image. This image, mighty and of exceeding brightness, stood before you, and its appearance was frightening. ³²The head of this image was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its middle and thighs of bronze, ³³its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. ³⁴As 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. ³⁵Then 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. ³⁶“This was the dream. Now we will tell the king its interpretation. ³⁷You, O king, the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, and the might, and the glory, ³⁸and 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. ³⁹Another kingdom inferior to you shall arise after you, and yet a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth. ⁴⁰And 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. ⁴¹And 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. ⁴²And as the toes of the feet were partly iron and partly clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly brittle. ⁴³As 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. ⁴⁴And 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 [Continued]

Week 3: Discussion Questions

Icebreaker Question:

If you could receive future knowledge from God (i.e. a prophecy) about one thing, what would it be and why?

Discussion Questions:

In our passage, what significance do you see in the symbolism of the various materials of the statue in Nebuchadnezzar's dream? How does the gold, silver, iron, etc. contrast with the rock?

Is it important that we know, or do not know, all the kingdoms represented in the statue? What do you think the main point of the dream is?

Who does the "rock" in the King's dream represent? Look at Matthew 16:18, 1 Corinthians 10:4, Ephesians 2:20, and 1 Peter 2:4-6. What characteristics does the rock show and what does it represent? What conclusions can we draw from God using a rock as the symbol?

Application Questions:

What does the dream and its interpretation show us about the idea of God's sovereignty in relation to the human kingdoms and power? What can we learn from it today?

What do you see in Nebuchadnezzar's reaction to Daniel's interpretation? Do you think his response was genuine? How should we respond when others react in a similar way?

Daniel's life changed as a result of how God used him in this situation. What can we learn from this change? (see James 4:6, 10) Does God always respond in this way when we are faithful in delivering truth to others?

Week 4

Kingdom Challengers

Daniel 3:1-30

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Week 4

DANIEL 3:1-30

¹King Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold, whose height was sixty cubits and its breadth six cubits. He set it up on the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. ²Then King Nebuchadnezzar sent to gather the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces to come to the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. ³Then the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces gathered for the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. And they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. ⁴And the herald proclaimed aloud, "You are commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, ⁵that when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, you are to fall down and worship the golden image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. ⁶And whoever does not fall down and worship shall immediately be cast into a burning fiery furnace." ⁷Therefore, as soon as all the peoples heard the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, all the peoples, nations, and languages fell down and worshiped the golden image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. ⁸Therefore at that time certain Chaldeans came forward and maliciously accused the Jews. ⁹They declared to King Nebuchadnezzar, "O king, live forever! ¹⁰You, O king, have made a decree, that every man who hears the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, shall fall down and worship the golden image. ¹¹And whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast into a burning fiery furnace. ¹²There are certain Jews whom you have appointed over the affairs of the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These men, O king, pay no attention to you; they do not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up." ¹³Then Nebuchadnezzar in furious rage [Continued]



Week 4: Discussion Questions

Icebreaker Question:

If you were invincible (could not die or be hurt) what would you do and why?

Discussion Questions:

What was the foundation of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego's confidence that defiance was the right move in this situation? What would your emotions be?

Why do you think God allowed Nebuchadnezzar to survive when he came close to the fiery furnace, but the guards who threw the prisoners into the furnace died?

Do you think Nebuchadnezzar took his statue down after he decreed that no one could speak against God?

Application Questions:

What can we learn from these three God-followers about dealing with proud leadership?

Have you ever had a situation where you have had to go against the majority in order to do the right thing? Or a situation where you should've but you didn't?

How can we help our kids be more like these three servants of God?

Week 5

Kingdom Authority

Daniel 4

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Week 5

DANIEL 4

¹King Nebuchadnezzar to all peoples, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied to you! ²It has seemed good to me to show the signs and wonders that the Most High God has done for me. ³How great are his signs, how mighty his wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion endures from generation to generation. ⁴I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at ease in my house and prospering in my palace. ⁵I saw a dream that made me afraid. As I lay in bed the fancies and the visions of my head alarmed me. ⁶So I made a decree that all the wise men of Babylon should be brought before me, that they might make known to me the interpretation of the dream. ⁷Then the magicians, the enchanters, the Chaldeans, and the astrologers came in, and I told them the dream, but they could not make known to me its interpretation. ⁸At last Daniel came in before me—he who was named Belteshazzar after the name of my god, and in whom is the spirit of the holy gods—and I told him the dream, saying, ⁹“O Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, because I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in you and that no mystery is too difficult for you, tell me the visions of my dream that I saw and their interpretation. ¹⁰The visions of my head as I lay in bed were these: I saw, and behold, a tree in the midst of the earth, and its height was great. ¹¹The tree grew and became strong, and its top reached to heaven, and it was visible to the end of the whole earth. ¹²Its leaves were beautiful and its fruit abundant, and in it was food for all. The beasts of the field found shade under it, and the birds of the heavens lived in its branches, and all flesh was fed from it. ¹³“I saw in the visions of my head as I lay in bed, and behold, a watcher, a holy one, came down from heaven. ¹⁴He proclaimed aloud and said thus: ‘Chop down the tree and lop off its branches, strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit. Let the beasts flee from under it and the birds from its branches. ¹⁵But leave the stump of its roots in the earth, bound with a band of iron and bronze, amid the tender grass [Continued]

Blank lined paper for writing.

Week 5: Discussion Questions

Icebreaker Question:

What is the best prank you've experienced or planned?

Discussion Questions:

What reasons did God give for humbling Nebuchadnezzar? What can we learn from God's actions?

Is there symbolism in Nebuchadnezzar being turned into an animal because of his pride? What do you think God was trying to communicate to us today, through this transformation?

What can we learn from Daniel's reaction to the interpretation, as well as his words of advice to the king? How did Daniel try to help the king after knowing what his future would be?

Application Questions:

Pride is often described as the root of all sin. Do you think that is true? Why or why not? In what ways does pride hinder our spiritual walk? What is the opposite of pride? (See Prov 11:2, 15:33, and 29:23)

How can we cultivate humility in our lives in order to avoid the consequences of our pride? (See James 4:6, 10)

Do you think it is possible to avoid pride in our lives? What actions can we take to avoid pride? Why do you think God takes pride so seriously, both here in this passage as well as other places in Scripture?

Week 6

Kingdom Judgment

Daniel 5

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Week 6

DANIEL 5

¹King Belshazzar made a great feast for a thousand of his lords and drank wine in front of the thousand. ²Belshazzar, when he tasted the wine, commanded that the vessels of gold and of silver that Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken out of the temple in Jerusalem be brought, that the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines might drink from them. ³Then they brought in the golden vessels that had been taken out of the temple, the house of God in Jerusalem, and the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines drank from them. ⁴They drank wine and praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone. ⁵Immediately the fingers of a human hand appeared and wrote on the plaster of the wall of the king's palace, opposite the lampstand. And the king saw the hand as it wrote. ⁶Then the king's color changed, and his thoughts alarmed him; his limbs gave way, and his knees knocked together. ⁷The king called loudly to bring in the enchanters, the Chaldeans, and the astrologers. The king declared to the wise men of Babylon, "Whoever reads this writing, and shows me its interpretation, shall be clothed with purple and have a chain of gold around his neck and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom." ⁸Then all the king's wise men came in, but they could not read the writing or make known to the king the interpretation. ⁹Then King Belshazzar was greatly alarmed, and his color changed, and his lords were perplexed. ¹⁰The queen, because of the words of the king and his lords, came into the banqueting hall, and the queen declared, "O king, live forever! Let not your thoughts alarm you or your color change. ¹¹There is a man in your kingdom in whom is the spirit of the holy gods. In the days of your father, light and understanding and wisdom like the wisdom of the gods were found in him, and King Nebuchadnezzar, your father—your father the king—made him chief of the magicians, enchanters, Chaldeans, and astrologers, ¹²because an excellent spirit, knowledge, and understanding to interpret dreams, explain...[Continued]

Week 6: Discussion Questions

Icebreaker Question:

Have you ever received a handwritten note or letter that left a lasting impact on you? What made it so special?

Discussion Questions:

Why do you think Daniel refused to take the gifts the king offered?

In what ways had Belshazzar ignored the lessons his father learned? Have you seen or experienced others do the same thing? Why does that often happen?

What differences do you see in how God dealt with Nebuchadnezzar versus how He dealt with Belshazzar? Why do you think God chose to deal with them so differently? What lessons can we learn from God's actions in these cases?

Application Questions:

How did Daniel gain a good reputation despite living and working in a foreign kingdom? How can we live and work in a "foreign place" and still maintain a good standing with those outside the faith? (Col 4:5-6) Why is this important?

Are there lessons we can learn from mistakes/disobedience in our family's past? Are there lessons we can learn from victories/obedience in our family's past?

What can we learn from Daniel's faithful service over many years to idol worshipping kings?

Week 7

Kingdom Persecution

Daniel 6

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Week 7

DANIEL 6

¹It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom 120 satraps, to be throughout the whole kingdom; ²and over them three high officials, of whom Daniel was one, to whom these satraps should give account, so that the king might suffer no loss. ³Then this 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. ⁴Then the high officials and the satraps sought to find a ground for complaint against Daniel with regard to the kingdom, but they could find no ground for complaint or any fault, because he was faithful, and no error or fault was found in him. ⁵Then these men said, "We shall not find any ground for complaint against this Daniel unless we find it in connection with the law of his God." ⁶Then these high officials and satraps came by agreement to the king and said to him, "O King Darius, live forever! ⁷All the high officials of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the counselors and the governors are agreed that the king should establish an ordinance and enforce an injunction, that whoever makes petition to any god or man for thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions. ⁸Now, O king, establish the injunction and sign the document, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, which cannot be revoked." ⁹Therefore King Darius signed the document and injunction. ¹⁰When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously. ¹¹Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel making petition and plea before his God. ¹²Then they came near and said before the king, concerning the injunction, "O king! Did you not sign an injunction, that anyone who makes petition to any god or man within thirty days except to you, O king, shall be cast into the [Continued]"



Week 7: Discussion Questions

Icebreaker Question:

If you could have any animal (real or imagined) as a pet what would it be and why?

Discussion Questions:

We know we can pray anywhere, so what do you think made Daniel pray near his window after he knew the decree had been signed? Do you think Daniel was trying to stir up trouble by doing this?

What can we learn from the different reactions of each of the humbled kings throughout the book of Daniel? What does it teach us about ourselves, and others we may try to reach with the Gospel?

Daniel had government officials scheming against him, yet they could find “no ground for complaint” about his character. What would people say if they looked into your life that closely?

Application Questions:

How can you emulate Daniel’s example of unwavering devotion to God standing firm in the face of adversity? What might it cost you to “obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29)?

How can you prioritize prayer and cultivate a deeper intimacy with God in your daily life, even amidst busy schedules and competing demands?

How can we trust God’s promises even in the face of circumstances outside of our control?

Week 8

Kingdom Prophecies

Daniel 7

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Week 8

DANIEL 7

¹In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel saw a dream and visions of his head as he lay in his bed. Then he wrote down the dream and told the sum of the matter.

²Daniel declared, "I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea."³ And four great beasts came up out of the sea, different from one another.⁴ The first was like a lion and had eagles' wings. Then as I looked its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man, and the mind of a man was given to it.⁵ And behold, another beast, a second one, like a bear. It was raised up on one side. It had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth; and it was told, 'Arise, devour much flesh.'⁶ After this I looked, and behold, another, like a leopard, with four wings of a bird on its back. And the beast had four heads, and dominion was given to it.⁷ After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, terrifying and dreadful and exceedingly strong. It had great iron teeth; it devoured and broke in pieces and stamped what was left with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.⁸ I considered the horns, and behold, there came up among them another horn, a little one, before which three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots. And behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things.⁹ "As I looked, thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days took his seat; his clothing was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames; its wheels were burning fire.¹⁰ A stream of fire issued and came out from before him; a thousand thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the court sat in judgment, and the books were opened.¹¹ "I looked then because of the sound of the great words that the horn was speaking. And as I looked, the beast was killed, and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire.¹² As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, [Continued]

Week 8: Discussion Questions

Icebreaker Question:

If you could make a rule that everyone had to follow for a day, what would it be?

Discussion Questions:

What stands out to you about the description of God in verses 9-10?

This vision spans over one thousand years of history, from the Babylonian Empire around 600 BC to the fall of the Roman Empire in 476 AD. What does the breadth of this prophecy show you about God?

How does the heavenly being's explanation help us understand Daniel's vision?

Application Questions:

How does this vision shape the way you see the world's rulers? Does it shape the way you see upcoming elections?

Look at verses 26-27 alongside Psalm 46. What hope do these verses give us when the world feels out of control?

Week 9

Kingdom Clashes

Daniel 8

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Week 9

DANIEL 8

¹In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar a vision appeared to me, Daniel, after that which appeared to me at the first. ²And I saw in the vision; and when I saw, I was in Susa the citadel, which is in the province of Elam. And I saw in the vision, and I was at the Ulai canal. ³I raised my eyes and saw, and behold, a ram standing on the bank of the canal. It had two horns, and both horns were high, but one was higher than the other, and the higher one came up last. ⁴I 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. ⁵As I was considering, behold, a male goat came from the west across the face of the whole earth, without touching the ground. And the goat had a conspicuous horn between his eyes. ⁶He came to the ram with the two horns, which I had seen standing on the bank of the canal, and he ran at him in his powerful wrath. ⁷I saw him come close to the ram, and he was enraged against him and struck the ram and broke his two horns. And the ram had no power to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground and trampled on him. And there was no one who could rescue the ram from his power. ⁸Then the goat became exceedingly great, but when he was strong, the great horn was broken, and instead of it there came up four conspicuous horns toward the four winds of heaven. ⁹Out of one of them came a little horn, which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the glorious land. ¹⁰It grew great, even to the host of heaven. And some of the host and some of the stars it threw down to the ground and trampled on them. ¹¹It became great, even as great as the Prince of the host. And the regular burnt offering was taken away from him, and the place of his sanctuary was overthrown. ¹²And a host will be given over to it together with the regular burnt offering because of transgression, and it will throw truth to the ground, and it will act and [Continued]

Week 9: Discussion Questions

Icebreaker Question:

Each member of the group writes down a funny or weird story from their life. Mix them up and try to guess who wrote which story.

Discussion Questions:

Daniel 8 presents a vision of a ram, a goat, and a horned creature, each with specific symbolic significance. What do you think these symbolize, and how do they relate to historical events and figures during the time of Daniel?

The vision in this passage shows a conflict between empires, culminating in God's victory. What truth can we take from the conflict and victory of God in this passage for the spiritual conflict happening today? (2 Cor 10:4-5)

If you'd been the one to have this vision, how would you feel? What would your reaction be?

Application Questions:

The visions in Daniel 8 can be challenging to interpret, requiring study and reliance on God's guidance. How can you cultivate a deeper understanding of prophetic passages like Daniel 8 through prayer, study, and reliance on the Holy Spirit?

God provided Gabriel to help Daniel understand the vision. How has He equipped you for the tasks He calls you to do? How does God provide wisdom to understand difficult parts of Scripture? (See 1 Cor 2:6-16)

Despite his emotional state, Daniel got up and did his job. What work needs to be done in your life despite your circumstances, emotions, or even weakness?

Week 10

Kingdom Cry

Daniel 9:1-23

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Week 10

DANIEL 9:1-23

¹In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, by descent a Mede, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans—
²in 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. ³Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. ⁴I 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, ⁵we have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from your commandments and rules. ⁶We 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. ⁷To 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. ⁸To us, O Lord, belongs open shame, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against you. ⁹To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against him ¹⁰and 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. ¹¹All Israel has transgressed your law and turned aside, refusing to obey your voice. And the curse and oath that are written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out upon us, because we have sinned against him. ¹²He 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. [Continued]

Week 10: Discussion Questions

Icebreaker Question:

Scroll back in your phone's photo archive (as far back as you can), choose a photo that you will share with someone else in the group.

Discussion Questions:

Even though he was exiled and in the employ of a foreign government, God still gave Daniel special revelation and insight. Why do you think that is? Why didn't God choose someone still living in Judah?

Looking at Daniel's prayer, how did he approach talking to God about his concerns? What are the parts of his prayer that we can learn from as he considers the state of Israel? What aspects of Daniel's prayer demonstrate a deep understanding of God's character and his people's history?

How can Daniel ask God to turn away from His wrath, while at the same time knowing it was what God had promised to do? What does that reveal about Daniel's understanding of God?

Application Questions:

How is our relationship with God similar to that of Israel? In what ways is it different? Why is that important?

In verses 18-19, Daniel asks God to act and to help the people of Israel. On what basis does he ask this? Are there ways in which Daniel asks that are different from how we often ask for God to act?

How could your prayers be more like Daniel's in this passage? In what ways are your prayers the same or different? We know that Daniel prayed often. Do you think his frequency of prayer had an impact on its content or flavor?

Week 11

Kingdom Decree

Daniel 9:24-27

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Week 11

DANIEL 9:24-27

²⁴“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.

²⁵Know 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. Then for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with squares and moat, but in a troubled time. ²⁶And 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. ²⁷And 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.”

Week 11: Discussion Questions

Icebreaker Question:

If you could join any band what would it be and why? And what would your role be? (Or make your own band).

Discussion Questions:

What are the main interpretations of the seventy weeks prophecy, and how do different theological perspectives view its fulfillment? What do you think about this prophecy's fulfillment personally? Why?

This prophecy includes references to the coming of the Messiah, His death, and the desolation of Jerusalem. How does this prophecy point to Jesus as the fulfillment of Old Testament messianic expectations? How does the fulfillment of these prophecies in Jesus impact your understanding of WHO He is and WHAT He came to do?

What do we know about the Anti-Christ? If you were alive during his time how would you identify him?

Application Questions:

The fulfillment of the seventy weeks prophecy demonstrates God's faithfulness to His promises throughout history. How does the fulfillment of prophecy in Scripture affirm your trust in God's sovereignty and reliability?

How can we live today in anticipation of Jesus's return, living as ambassadors of His kingdom? (2 Cor 5:11-21) How can we live as people who believe that Jesus is coming soon?

Week 12

Kingdom Messenger

Daniel 10

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Week 10

DANIEL 10

¹In 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. ²In those days I, Daniel, was mourning for three weeks. ³I ate no delicacies, no meat or wine entered my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, for the full three weeks. ⁴On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river (that is, the Tigris) ⁵I lifted up my eyes and looked, and behold, a man clothed in linen, with a belt of fine gold from Uphaz around his waist. ⁶His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and the sound of his words like the sound of a multitude. ⁷And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision, but a great trembling fell upon them, and they fled to hide themselves. ⁸So I was left alone and saw this great vision, and no strength was left in me. My radiant appearance was fearfully changed, and I retained no strength. ⁹Then I heard the sound of his words, and as I heard the sound of his words, I fell on my face in deep sleep with my face to the ground. ¹⁰And behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. ¹¹And he said to me, "O Daniel, man greatly loved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for now I have been sent to you." And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling. ¹²Then he said to me, "Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand and humbled yourself before your God, your words have been heard, and I have come because of your words. ¹³The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days, but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I was left there with the kings of Persia, ¹⁴and came to make you understand what is to happen to your people in the latter days. For the vision is for days yet to come." [Continued]

Week 12: Discussion Questions

Icebreaker Question:

If you could organize a retreat, where would it be? Whom would it be with? What activities would you do?

Discussion Questions:

What stands out to you about how the man in who appears in verse 5 speaks to Daniel?

Based on what the man says to Daniel, how does God see us?

What stands out to you about the delays the man faced in his journey?

Application Questions:

When we have to give someone a hard truth, what can we learn from how the man communicates to Daniel?

Share about a time when God strengthened you in an unexpected way.

Read Ephesians 6:10-12. How are those truths reflected in this chapter?

Week 13

Kingdom Wars

Daniel 11

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Week 13

DANIEL 11

¹"And as for me, in the first year of Darius the Mede, I stood up to confirm and strengthen him. ²"And now I will show you the truth. Behold, three more kings shall arise in Persia, and a fourth shall be far richer than all of them. And when he has become strong through his riches, he shall stir up all against the kingdom of Greece. ³Then a mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion and do as he wills. ⁴And as soon as he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken and divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not to his posterity, nor according to the authority with which he ruled, for his kingdom shall be plucked up and go to others besides these. ⁵"Then the king of the south shall be strong, but one of his princes shall be stronger than he and shall rule, and his authority shall be a great authority. ⁶After some years they shall make an alliance, and the daughter of the king of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement. But she shall not retain the strength of her arm, and he and his arm shall not endure, but she shall be given up, and her attendants, he who fathered her, and he who supported her in those times. ⁷"And from a branch from her roots one shall arise in his place. He shall come against the army and enter the fortress of the king of the north, and he shall deal with them and shall prevail. ⁸He shall also carry off to Egypt their gods with their metal images and their precious vessels of silver and gold, and for some years he shall refrain from attacking the king of the north. ⁹Then the latter shall come into the realm of the king of the south but shall return to his own land. ¹⁰"His sons shall wage war and assemble a multitude of great forces, which shall keep coming and overflow and pass through, and again shall carry the war as far as his fortress. ¹¹Then the king of the south, moved with rage, shall come out and fight against the king of the north. And he shall raise a great multitude, but it shall be given into his hand. ¹²And when the multitude is taken away, his heart shall be exalted, and he shall cast down tens...[Continued]

Week 13: Discussion Questions

Icebreaker Question:

Give every member an index card and a marker. Ask members to take 5-10 minutes to create a personal "King Trading Card." IE, what would you be like as a King/Queen? It should include a portrait, a nickname for their "king," made up stats (can be anything they feel fits), and one thing about how they would rule. When everyone is done mix them up and pass them out so every gets someone else's card. Read them aloud.

Discussion Questions:

These prophecies are very detailed and weren't fulfilled for several years. What does that tell you about God? Does it give you confidence in God's revealed truth?

Daniel 11 portrays a series of conflicts between earthly kingdoms, influenced by spiritual forces. What can we learn about the spiritual world, and spiritual warfare from this passage? What does it teach us about the sovereignty of God in the midst of human conflict in our world today?

At this point in history, Israel was coming to the end of their 70-year exile in Babylon and the future of their nation was unclear to them. What would this message offer to them?

Application Questions:

The conflicts and upheavals in this passage show the challenges we face in a world full of political instability and spiritual and physical warfare. How can we stay steadfast in faith and trust in God's sovereignty even when we are living in the midst of these difficult circumstances? How do you think we should respond and what actions should we take during political instability, and even during war?

What can we see from this passage about God's plan for human history?

Week 14

Kingdom Come

Daniel 12

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Week 14

DANIEL 12

¹"At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation till that time. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone whose name shall be found written in the book. ²And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. ³And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever. ⁴But you, Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, until the time of the end. Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase." ⁵Then I, Daniel, looked, and behold, two others stood, one on this bank of the stream and one on that bank of the stream. ⁶And someone said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the stream, "How long shall it be till the end of these wonders?" ⁷And I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the stream; he raised his right hand and his left hand toward heaven and swore by him who lives forever that it would be for a time, times, and half a time, and that when the shattering of the power of the holy people comes to an end all these things would be finished. ⁸I heard, but I did not understand. Then I said, "O my lord, what shall be the outcome of these things?" ⁹He said, "Go your way, Daniel, for the words are shut up and sealed until the time of the end. ¹⁰Many shall purify themselves and make themselves white and be refined, but the wicked shall act wickedly. And none of the wicked shall understand, but those who are wise shall understand. ¹¹And from the time that the regular burnt offering is taken away and the abomination that makes desolate is set up, there shall be 1,290 days. ¹²Blessed is he who waits and arrives at the 1,335 days. ¹³But go your way till the end. And you shall rest and shall stand in your allotted place at the end of the days."

Week 14: Discussion Questions

Icebreaker Question:

If you could add a holiday to the calendar, what would it be, what date would it be on, what would it celebrate, and why?

Discussion Questions:

What is Michael's role in this prophecy?

How do you see this vision being fulfilled, even today?

In verse 13, God promises Daniel rest and an "allotted place at the end of the days." What does this teach us about God?

Application Questions:

Look at verse 2. What is the difference between those who awake to everlasting life and those who wake to everlasting contempt? Where do you fall?

What has been your biggest takeaway from studying Daniel's life?

What has been your biggest takeaway from studying the visions and prophecy found in the book of Daniel?



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