

Life Group Study Guide

Winter 2017



Daniel

CHAPTERS 7-12

The Prophets of Israel

Prophets had a key role in declaring Israel's future and calling them back to obedience. The prophet Jeremiah announced the impending invasion by Nebuchadnezzar and the subsequent captivity in Babylon.

And like Jeremiah the prophet, Daniel envisioned a future day when God would restore the fortunes of Israel and bring them back into the land.

This would be a time of restoration and involve a time of tribulation, rebuilding and blessings.

Daniel has given a detailed picture of the consummation of the age. God is sovereign who does as He will, and will consummate this age according to His good pleasure (Daniel 2:21; 4:35). The Gentile world powers that have opposed God and His truth will be conquered and destroyed; Israel, the oppressed nation, will be rescued and established.

- Moody Handbook of Theology



Daniel Overview

Find messages online (including Daniel Part 1) at wearescc.org/teaching

Part Two: Daniel 7-12 (605 B.C. to 539 B.C.)

Study 1	Overview	God's Prophecy & Sovereignty
Study 2	Chapter 7:1-28	The Son of Man
Study 3	Chapter 8:1-27	God's Plan for Israel
Study 4	Chapter 9:1-27	Daniel's Prayer
Study 5	Chapter 10:1-21	Spiritual Warfare
Study 6	Chapter 11:1-12:4	Remarkable Prophecy
Study 7	Chapter 12:5-13	Be Strong in the Spiritual Battle

Chronological Order to the Book of Daniel

Chapters 1-4	Standing firm in the faith
Chapter 7	Vision of the four beasts/kingdoms
Chapter 8	The vision of the goat
Chapter 5	Writing on the wall
Chapter 9	The seventy weeks
Chapter 6	Daniel in the lion's den
Chapters 10-12	Daniel's prayer and visions

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9cSC9uobtPM>

Themes in Daniel

God's Sovereignty | Resolute Living | Christian Character
Light to Unbelievers | The Return of Christ

Daniel the Man

Daniel's name means, "God is my judge," and he was in the first group of captives taken from Jerusalem to Babylon. He was of royal or noble blood. As the Scripture shows, he was resolute and unwavering in his faith despite his love for the idolatrous king. The ministry of Daniel was prophetic.

Key Theological Concepts



Dispensationalism:

Sees God as structuring His relationship with mankind through several stages of revelation which mark off different dispensations or ages.

For example: man's relationship with God before the fall, the age from Moses to Christ, the age of the church, and the future millennium reign of Christ.

Millennial Kingdom:

Refers to the thousand year reign of Christ mentioned in Revelation 20:1-6. As the day of Christ's return draws near, the rapture and resurrection of believers will occur, leading to the seven years of tribulation. It is at the conclusion of the tribulation the Millennial/ Messianic Kingdom of Christ will begin. This is also known as the dispensational premillennial view.

Prayer

Through this study of Daniel's life, it is our prayer that God will stir in His people, a greater devotion to Him and that His own will live resolved lives, committed to following His Word while expectantly looking toward Jesus' return.



God's Prophecy & Sovereignty

(Daniel Chapters 7-12)

Study# 1

1-8-17 Message

Prophecy:

In Scripture, prophecy is always presented as the infallible, authoritative declaration of God's inerrant revelation. It was not an impression on the mind, whether clear or vague, but a verbal declaration, using words the prophet vocalized audibly or wrote legibly in the presence of others who could hear or read them. Scripture never uses the terminology of prophecy to speak of mystical, intuitive impressions. (Paraphrased from John MacArthur)

Prophecy Today:

The prophets were greatly instrumental in building up and strengthening the early church. Both apostles and prophets have passed from the scene but the foundation they laid is that on which all of Christ's church has been built (Eph. 2:20).

Read 2 Peter 1:19-21

"For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."

- What do these verses tell us about the origin of prophetic scripture?
- What do we know about its interpretation (vs. 20)?
- What do these verses tell us about the certainty of prophetic revelation?

Read Matthew 7:15-20

"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits."

- What do these verses tell us about recognizing true prophecy?
- What does false prophecy look like today (Check out 2 Peter 3:1-3)?
- What is the appropriate attitude a believer should have toward scripture?

God's Sovereignty

Sovereignty means that God is the supreme ruler and authority. He determines whatever comes to pass, and His divine purpose is always accomplished. He is continually at work within His creation bringing about His perfect will.

Verses on God's Sovereignty

As a group, read the following verses sequentially:

Colossians 1:16

Isaiah 46:9-10

Job 42:2

Proverbs 16:9

Proverbs 19:21

Romans 8:28



Discuss and Evaluate

- ✓ How much emphasis does scripture put on God's sovereignty?
- ✓ How should knowing that God is completely sovereign impact the way we live? What is the believer's responsibility?
- ✓ How does knowing that God is sovereign over difficult life challenges bring us hope?

The Son of Man

Daniel 7:1-28

Study# 2

1-15-17 Message

Chapter 7 marks the second half of Daniel's book. The first half of the book presents the life and calling of the prophet in chronological order. The second half of the book is prophetic history and skips backward to events that occurred earlier in Daniel's life. Daniel's visions vary in detail, but they are overlapping and make similar points. They tell us that God is in control of history. That human kingdoms will succeed human kingdoms until the coming of the Lord's Anointed, the Messiah, but that in the end it is His kingdom that will fill the whole earth.

Scripture: Daniel 7:1-8

Chapter 7 covers much of the same ground as Daniel 2 where King Nebuchadnezzar, a man of the world, has a dream of a statue representing the future fall of Babylon. Here Daniel, the man of God, has a vision that also represents the fall of the same empire, however it is depicted by four beasts instead of a statue

- Daniel was a student and had studied both Isaiah and Jeremiah's prophecies. How do you think he felt as he witnessed their prophecies come to pass?
- Compare God using a statue to communicate the future course of the world to King Nebuchadnezzar, to the terrifying beasts used to communicate the same fate to Daniel? What is the significance in using the imagery of the beasts? (see chart below)

The different beasts and the kingdom eras they represent:

Lion w/wings of an eagle (vs 4)	Bear with 3 ribs in its mouth (vs 5)	The leopard with 4 wings (vs 6)	The "dreadful and terrible" beast (vs. 7)
<u>Kingdom:</u> Babylonian Empire	<u>Kingdom:</u> Medo-Persian Empire (and 3 countries/nations)	<u>Kingdom:</u> Grecian Empire	<u>Kingdom:</u> Roman Empire
<u>Ruler:</u> King Nebuchadnezzar	<u>Ruler:</u> King Darius the Mede	<u>Ruler:</u> Alexander the Great (and 4 divisions of his kingdom)	<u>Ruler:</u> Multiple rulers
<u>Chapter 2:</u> Head of Gold	<u>Chapter 2:</u> Arms and chest of silver	<u>Chapter 2:</u> Belly and thighs of bronze	<u>Chapter 2:</u> Legs of iron

Scripture: Daniel 7:9-14

Daniel's dream was not only about four beasts, but also about the great judgment, the return of Christ, and the Kingdom of God.

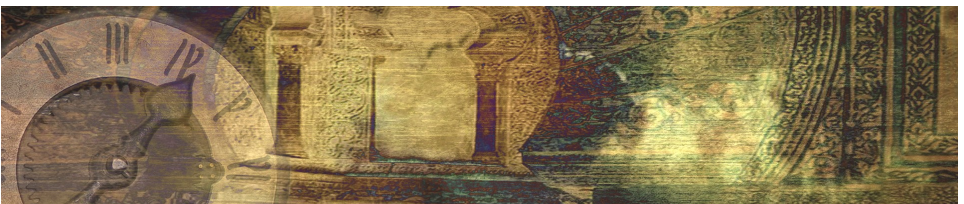
- What strikes you in the description of the Ancient of Days and Son of Man? Discuss their physical descriptions, throne and surroundings.
- How does Daniel's description of God inspire confidence within Daniel himself? Where else do we see a description of God like this in Scripture? (See Revelation 1:12-16)

Scripture: Daniel 7:15-28

- Daniel's distress seems to be centered around the fourth beast. Why do you suppose this is the case? What does verse 25 tell us about the believer's life during the fourth kingdom?
- How did this dream and interpretation impact Daniel?

Discuss and Evaluate

- ✓ The four beasts and the little horn remind us that evil is very real and present in our world. How should the presence of evil, and the fact that it will continue to exist until Jesus returns, impact the way we live each day?
- ✓ What do you specifically look forward to with the return of Christ?



God's Plan for Israel

(Daniel 8:1-27)

Study# 3

1-22-16 Message

Chapter 2:4-7:28 is written in Aramaic because the emphasis is for those in the Gentile kingdoms. Chapter 8, at the end of the Daniel's prophecy, is written in Hebrew and the major emphasis is God's plan for the nation of Israel in the end times.

Daniel's Dream:

In this instance we do not see Daniel interpreting another man's dream. These are the recorded events of his own dreams. In each instance, note that it is God who gives the dream and its interpretation to Daniel.

- ◇ **Location:** Shushan (Susa) was a city about 200 miles southeast of Babylon and would eventually become the capital of the Persian Empire. The River Uai was more than likely the canal that flowed through Susa.
- ◇ **The Ram:**
Medo-Persian Empire & King Darius . The silver torso in King Neb's dream
- ◇ **The Goat:**
*The Grecian Empire and Alexander the Great
4 horns = after Alexander's death his dominion divided and was given to 4 generals/nations*

Scripture: Daniel 8:1-14

Chapter 8 records the vision that had come to Daniel before the fateful banquet with King Belshazzar in Chapter 5.

- Why do you think God spoke in visions to Daniel? How does God primarily speak to believers today? (Check out Hebrews 4:12 and John 15:26)
- What does the imagery of a beast depict in Daniel's dream? How does this imagery describe the kingdoms of this world?

Scripture: Daniel 8:15-27

- Who specifically interprets Daniel's dream for him? Who was the voice that instructed Gabriel?
- Daniel was fearful when he received this vision (vs 27). How does knowing what you know about the character and position of God in the world impact your outlook on the future?

Discuss and Evaluate



Daniel is a great example of a student of the Word and someone who relied on God. It was not merely academic for Daniel. When he encountered a frightening situation he didn't know the meaning of, he sought the Lord for an explanation and allowed the Lord to instruct him. Daniel was earnestly concerned for his people and their future.

- ✓ **If Daniel's response to the end of the world was grim, what do you think our response should be?**
- ✓ **How would your life be different this week if you were to truly believe God reigns as King? Judge? Commander? Victor?**
- ✓ **As a group, do we live as a people who serve the King, Judge, Commander, and Victor? How can we continually do this better?**

Daniel Prays for His People

(Daniel 9:1-27)

Study# 4

1-29-17 Message

Daniel himself was a prophetic student. He had realized the importance of God's Word, though the words had not yet been written, he understood "all Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness" (2 Timothy 2:16) -H.A. Ironside

Scripture: Daniel 9:1-2 Dedicated to the Word

Daniel didn't have a complete Bible as we do today, but he valued what he had and searched it diligently. From this passage, we know that Daniel had the prophecy of Jeremiah and in his careful study, noticed that God would accomplish 70 years of captivity for Jerusalem (Jeremiah 25).

- When Babylon fell, Daniel turned to the prophecies. What encouragement did Daniel find from Jeremiah 29:10-14?
- What part of God's Word do you turn to when you need to regain your balance in the midst of transition?

"One of the beautiful things about the inspired Word of God is its constant freshness; no matter how often we read it, there is always something new to learn or something familiar to see in a new light." -Warren Weirs

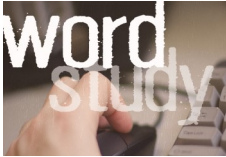
Scripture: Daniel 9:3-19 Readiness to Pray

Daniel was devoted to God and His word. Upon learning that the time had almost drawn near for the people of Judah to be restored to their land, it stirred in him the very depths of this prayer.

- Describe Daniel's commitment to prayer. Compare that to your focused time in prayer: how do they differ?
- How did Daniel describe Israel's sin? Do you think that Daniel was overstating things? Why or why not?
- Confession in prayer can be overlooked by believers today. Why is it important to be purposeful in confession? What can we learn from Daniel's confession in verses 4-6?

Scripture: Daniel 9:20-27 Answer to Prayer

- What did Gabriel come to give Daniel (verse 22-23)?
- Look carefully at verse 24 - to whom and where does the 70 week prophecy apply? What will be accomplished in the 70 weeks? (see study diagram)

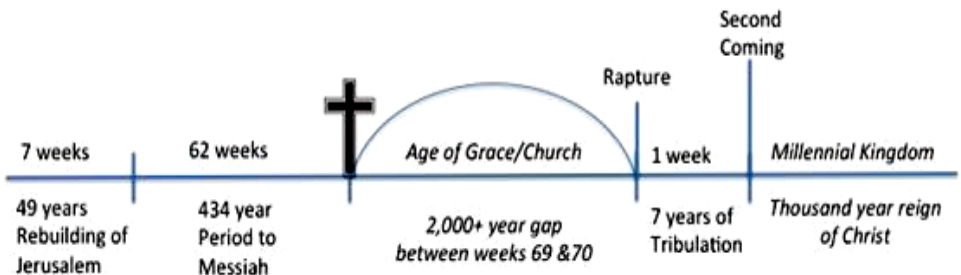


Shamuwa literally means “sevens” in Hebrew and simply refers to a unit of 7. It can refer to 7 days, weeks, months or years. This specific passage indicates that 1-*shamuwa* week = a 7 year period.

Discuss and Evaluate

- ✓ Daniel prepared himself for prayer (vs 3). Are there ways we can make our prayer time more purposeful?
- ✓ No one is capable of earning forgiveness and just as important, we are not entitled to mercy. To God alone belongs mercy and forgiveness (vs. 9). What comfort can the believer have in understanding this truth?

70 weeks



Spiritual Warfare

(Daniel 10:1-21)

Study# 5

2-5-17 Message

Two years have elapsed since King Cyrus gave permission to the Jews to return to Jerusalem, their holy city (Ezra 1:2-3). Daniel himself did not return but remained in Babylon due to his prominent position with the king and was now possibly in his late eighties. Daniel lived long enough to see Jeremiah's prophecy fulfilled and to see God bring the Jewish exiles back home to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple. The exiles arrived and saw their holy city laid in rubble and occupied by foreigners.

A remnant of God's people had formed after being in exile for 70 years. Soon after being lead back to their homeland by God, their rejoicing and praise turned to complacency toward God and His Word.

Scripture: Daniel 10:1-3 A Concerned Prophet

Israel was chosen by God to be a light to the Gentiles. He wanted His people to be a light of hope in a dark world and to point them to a living God. As described by Ezra (9:10-15) their enthusiasm to be back home was soon replaced with apathy and tolerance, which grieved Daniel deeply (vs. 10:2-3).

- How does giving into temptation weaken the believer's witness?
- How is the believer vulnerable to temptation and attack when life seems to be going well?
- Daniel fasted and prayed when he learned that his people were becoming apathetic and complacent toward God. How do you respond when you hear of a friend who is struggling with their faith?

Scripture: Daniel 10:1-3 An Awesome Vision

In Daniel's mourning, fasting and prayer a majestic angel appeared to him bringing key insights and understanding of Israel's future.



- How is the glorious man described in vs 5-6? How does the majestic man address Daniel?
- Compare Revelation 1:12-15. What are the similarities and differences? Do we know who Daniel encountered?

Scripture: Daniel 10:10-21 An Invisible War

Daniel's conversation with the angel reminds us that there is an invisible war going on in the heavens between the forces of evil and the power of God.

- How does it make you feel to think a whole spiritual war is being waged around you between the power of God and the force of evil?
- In what ways is prayer a powerful weapon in that war?
- Read Ephesians 6:12. What encouragement does this provide for the believer today?

Discuss and Evaluate

- ✓ How do you discern if a difficult circumstance is just "life happening" or if it is evidence of spiritual warfare?
- ✓ How does thinking or talking about the end times affect you personally?



Remarkable Prophecy

(Daniel 11:1-45)

Study# 6

2-12-17 Message

Fulfilled prophecy is one of the biggest evidences of the Bible's inspiration and the omniscience of God. For only God could know with such precise detail, the future events of Daniel's day, which is now our history. The events recorded in Daniel 11 have remarkable precision and detail, listing kingdom divisions, treaties, and invasions already fulfilled.

Prophecies already fulfilled (Daniel 11:1-35)



- About Persia (11:1-2)
- About Greece (11:3-4)
- About Egypt and Syria (11:5-20)
- About Antiochus Epiphanes and Syria (11:21-35)

"How remarkable that history confirms prophecy and thus sets its seal upon the divine inspiration of the Bible" -H.A. Ironside

Prophecies yet to be fulfilled (Daniel 11:36– 12:3)

- About the tribulation and antichrist (11:36-12:1)
- About the promised kingdom (12:2-3)
- Final instructions to Daniel (12:4-13)



Discuss Prophecy

- How do you respond to the statement, “fulfilled prophecy is one of the biggest evidences of the Bible’s inspiration”?
- What significance is it that Daniel not only foretold events for God’s people, but also events recorded in secular history?
- What parts of Scripture do we need to study besides prophecy, to be truly prepared for the Lord’s return?

Discuss End Times

- Why do you think God revealed information about the end of the world in such a mysterious and prophetic way?
- How often do you think about the end times? Why do you think that is?
- What questions do you still wonder about in regard to the rapture of the saints?
(Note theological concepts on page 2)



Discuss and Evaluate

- ✓ How should the knowledge we gain from the prophecies of Daniel shape our everyday lives before God?
- ✓ When faced with persecution, what are the factors that make people turn back to their faith?

Being Strong in the Spiritual Battle

(Daniel 12:1-13)

Study# 7

2-19-17 Message

We see a shift in the end of Daniel chapter 11 to prophecies regarding “the time of the end” (vs 11:35). In the end times there will be one last world dictator, the Antichrist which will bring about the seven years of tribulation.

Seven Years of Tribulation

The rise of the Antichrist

Tribulation events

Wars and invasions

Battle of Armageddon

Return of Christ to defeat the Antichrist

Resurrection of the dead



Scripture: Daniel 12:1-4

This is a message of great hope! A great distress is foretold by Daniel that Israel will face a time of tribulation but will be defended and delivered by the mighty Lord. Everyone who has placed their faith in Christ can look toward the end with anticipation in being with Him in His glorious kingdom!

- What does God give Israel in the first 3 verses of Chapter 12? Why?
- Who is the special defender of Israel? What singular responsibility has he been given?
- Why has Satan continually tried to destroy the nation of Israel?

Scripture: Daniel 12:5-13

- When will the book of Daniel be more fully understood?
- Why won't the wicked understand the spiritual significance of what is happening during the tribulation?
- Explain the promises given to Daniel in 12:13.

Discuss and Evaluate

- ✓ What reminders do you have in your life that we are actually aliens in our world, much as Daniel was an alien in Babylon? (See Philippians 3:20-21)
- ✓ How would you describe the strength that a constant prayer life gives a believer?
- ✓ Daniel was dedicated to God's Word which helped him live a resolved life. What are some practical ways you can make being in God's Word a priority?



To the Christian, the book of Daniel must ever be a precious and soul stirring record of the love and care of our gracious God, who always watches over His own.

H.A. Ironside

Prayer Requests /Notes

Date

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Tips for studying Daniel

READ

the chapter/verses a couple days before hearing it taught

LISTEN

be sure to catch our weekly teaching on Daniel (available online or app)

APPLY

discuss and grow your faith with a group of other believers

Getting into a Life Group

wearescc.org/life-groups/

1. Consider attending a Group Link event for more info
2. Check out the Life Group finder online
3. Complete an inquiry form on Sunday or online

Need more help? Email Pastor John at idoty@wearescc.org



Snohomish Community Church

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