

GROWTH + GROUPS

NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide
SB 03.03.2024

THY KINGDOM COME— DANIEL 7:1-14

PART 1: Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles or observations stood out to you from this week's message? Discuss with your group.

Since God is outside of time, and knows the end from the beginning, He can confidently speak about future events as though they were already past. Through the prophet Isaiah the Lord declares, 'I am the LORD, that is My name; and My glory I will not give to another, nor My praise to carved images. Behold, the former things have come to pass, and new things I declare; before they spring forth, I tell you of them.' When God speaks of future events, we call that prophecy. This ability to prophecy future events with 100% accuracy is something that sets the Bible apart from every other religious book. 'Most of the founders of the world's religions never attempted to tell the future, and the other 'holy books' of the world do not really include prophecies. The Bible is different. Its prophecies contain the names of specific people, times, places, and events. Most of them were written centuries before the events described, and those that have already been fulfilled came to pass exactly as foretold.' Some of the most amazing and accurate prophecies in the Bible can be found in the book of Daniel. We'll begin looking at some of them today. Let's get into our lesson...

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

1. What struck you most from Pastor Daniel's sermon?
2. What excites you about the future? What worries you about the future?

When we walk into a passage like Daniel 7, we often find ourselves in unfamiliar terrain, unsure of how to get our bearings. Often end times prophecies and visions like the ones in Daniel 7 lead us to confusion and speculation, but they are actually designed to lead us into hope. For the Christian, apocalyptic visions are more about life and beginning than destruction. At the center of this vision is the eternal King seated on His eternal throne. God promises His people an eternal kingdom where they will dwell with Him, made possible only by the Messiah, Jesus Christ, and His sacrifice for us. While we wait for the future that is described in this chapter, we can trust in the present and eternal hope we have in God.

PART 2: Digging Deeper in God's Word: Life Lessons

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ DANIEL 7:1-8

1. In the first half of the chapter, Daniel records his dream then seeks an interpretation. What does he seem to focus on?
2. Look at Daniel 7:2,4,6,7, 8 and 9. What is the common phrase that Daniel keeps bringing up? Why do you think Daniel keeps saying this?
3. Have a volunteer describe each of the first three beasts and what they were given or directed to do?
4. What elements of the dream worry Daniel and why?

Daniel began to see visions in the first year of Belshazzar, approximately 553 B.C. By that time Daniel was probably a man in his mid 60's. He had a dream composed of several visions. The images in his visions included the four winds, the great sea, and four huge beasts, which Daniel described in some detail. The four beasts have been interpreted to represent the world powers of Daniel's day—Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. As believers, we can grow in

our confidence in God's sovereignty and ultimate redemptive purpose by understanding His prophetic revelation in Scripture concerning the presence of evil and by confirming the revelation's fulfillment in history. While we do not rejoice about the persistence of evil, knowing that God has revealed in the Scriptures that evil persists helps us trust Him even more as we seek to follow Him and resist evil.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ DANIEL 7:9-14

1. How did Daniel describe God in these verses? 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?
2. What actions did God take concerning the beasts, and what does that convey to the captives who lived in a chaotic world? What does it convey to you?
3. Read Daniel 7:13-14 again and look for all the descriptors of Jesus' kingdom. What do we learn from these descriptions? How does that kingdom differ from the earthly kingdom we inhabit today?
4. The final figure to appear in Daniel's vision is "one like the Son of man." This is a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ. What effect does His coming have on the inhabitants and rulers of the world?

The descriptions of the Ancient of Days is the same description we see of Jesus in Revelation 1. God is a King who reigns forever and ever. We will never see the end of His days. He is eternally and radically in control of all human events. As his visions continued, Daniel saw One like a son of man, meaning this person was in human form. Jesus regularly referred to Himself as the Son of Man. The scene depicts Jesus the Messiah as being submissive to the Ancient of Days and obedient to His will. Just as God, the Ancient of Days, has authority to set up and to destroy the kingdoms of this world, He also has authority to empower His Messiah to rule.

5. How does knowing that God will accomplish His plan in the end, encourage you?
6. Pastor Daniel asked everyone to read Revelations 13 as homework. For next week. Be especially aware that this is a description of the coming anti-Christ, also known as the "little horn" in the book of Daniel. Take note of his character and nature as well as what he does and boasts of.

PART 3: Applying God's Word

What did you learn from this study and how does this personally speak to you? Discuss with your group.

Who is the 'Son of Man' that comes with the clouds of heaven, approaches the Ancient of Days, receives glory from Him, is worshipped by all nations, all peoples, and every language? It's Jesus! After the religious leaders arrested Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, they brought Him before the ruling counsel and demanded He tell them whether He was the Messiah. In response, Jesus told them, 'If I tell you, you will not believe Me, and if I asked you, you would not answer. But from now on, the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the mighty God.' In response, they asked 'Are you then the Son of God?' He replied, 'You say that I am.' Then they said 'Why do we need any more testimony? We have heard it from his own lips.' (Luke 22:67-7)

Jesus is the 'Son of man' who is right now seated at the right hand of the Father. Someday soon, He will return to the earth on the clouds just as He promised. When He does, He is going to right every wrong and fix what is broken and restore what has been lost and establish a kingdom that will never end! This is what our hearts long for. It will also fulfill the prayer request He taught His disciples to pray 2,000 years ago when He said, 'After this manner therefore pray ye, 'Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.'" His kingdom is coming! Every eye will see Him! Every knee will bow! The King is coming! Your King is coming! Are you ready?

ENCOUNTER GOD in 2024

1. Daniel was fearful when he received this vision. How does knowing what you know about the character and position of God in the world impact your outlook on the future?
2. How would your life be different this week if you were to truly believe God reigns as King? Judge? Commander? Victor?
3. What about us as a group? Do we live, corporately, as a people who serve the King, Judge, Commander, and Victor? How can we do better?

PRAYER:

Praise God for His character and position that gives us hope in a dark and terrifying world.

Pray that visions like Daniel's would fill us with hopeful expectation of the future and fill us with the grace to persevere when trouble comes.

"I am the LORD, that is My name; and My glory I will not give to another, nor My praise to carved images. Behold, the former things have come to pass, and new things I declare; before they spring forth, I tell you of them." (Is. 42:8-9)