

Introduction - Daniel Study

I am excited about the journey you are about to take through the book of Daniel. It is an awesome book with some familiar stories about the lion's den and fiery furnace. The truths in this book will greatly challenge you in the areas of courage, boldness, faith and security in God alone. I have been greatly humbled by the courage and faith of Daniel, Hanniah, Mishael and Azariah. They were faithful to God from their teens to their 80s. They are great examples and role models for trusting God in tough times. As you study this book, I would like for you to keep in mind several things that will assist your understanding:

1. The Holy Spirit wrote the Bible and will reveal its truth to you. (2 Peter 1: 20-21, John 14: 26 and 16:13) Some of the stories and prophecies may be difficult to understand, but trust that the Holy Spirit who wrote the Bible will reveal to you its truth. Before studying pray this prayer: "Holy Spirit, You wrote this. Reveal the truth of your Word to me/us."

2. Chapters 1-6 are chronological starting in 605 BC and ending in 536 BC. Chapters 7-12 are not chronological, but are mostly prophetic, revealing the future for Israel, world kingdoms and the end times. Chapters 7-12 may be difficult to comprehend, so do not be discouraged, but allow God to reveal the truth to you for your life. I have excluded Chapter eight, but refer to it later. Chapter eight has a lot of detail about historical events that I felt could be confusing, so I decided to not include it in the lesson. Even Daniel struggled with understanding the prophecies, but it created a greater sense of awe for God.

"As high as the heavens are above the earth so are My ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." Isaiah 55:9

If you do not feel comfortable leading the lessons in Chapters 7-12, you may want to ask a local pastor to lead the group or provide guidance.

In order to assist you in leading the studies in Chapters 7-12, here are some insights into prophecy.

What is prophecy? Prophecy has two main aspects. The first is foretelling, or proclaiming the truth. Prophets spent the majority of their time declaring the truth about God and Israel's relationship to Him. Prophets were bold and many lived lonely lives as they called rebellious people back to a relationship with God. Prophets suffered ridicule and persecution and some were martyred. The second aspect of prophecy is to foretell or reveal the future. Prophets were used by God to reveal the future. God used many different prophets to tell about the

coming of Jesus, His life, death and return. There were also prophecies concerning the future of Israel or surrounding nations like Babylon and Assyria.

Why did God use prophecy? Prophecy is used by God to reveal His sovereignty. God is all-powerful and knows the end from the beginning. Prophecy is also used to reveal His greatness and the truth of His Word. What He says will happen, happens. When He reveals the future and then it comes true as He said, it builds confidence in your heart and increases your faith. Realize that over a 1500-year period of time God used many different prophets to predict the coming of Christ, how he would live and how he would die. To have confidence that all the prophecies came true is confirmation that God is in control and can be trusted with everything.

3. The book of Daniel allows us to tackle subjects that we might otherwise ignore. We will be stretched and strengthened in areas that we need to know about and learn from.

4. Most chapters have a coach's testimony at the end to add to the lesson. The chapters that do not have a testimony are for you to add testimonies from your group, or for you to find on your own.

At the end of each chapter is a section entitled "Talking Points." The talking points can be used as a guide for small groups or you personally. The talking points identify the main thought, key scripture and discussion questions that will help you dig deeper into the lesson.

Come walk with Daniel and let God speak to you and strengthen your heart for service with Him.

If you want to learn more about the Book of Daniel, I suggest reading commentaries and other resources on the Book. Secure Leadership is intentionally designed for small groups and personal bible study, so it brief. There is so much that can be learned about the culture, history and text of the Book of Daniel. Below are some commentaries and resources:

Sowers Renald E. The Most High God. The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry Inc. West Collingswood, New Jersey. 1982

Barnes, Albert. Notes On The Book Of Daniel. London: George Routledge & Company
1853

The New Bible Commentary. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company
1991

Wood, Leon. A Commentary On Daniel. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House
1973

Dedication:

I dedicate this book to all the coaches with whom I have studied the Bible over the last 10

years in Hudson, Strongsville and Akron, Ohio. It has been a joy to open God's Word and fellowship with these men and women. God's Word has powerfully spoken to us about coaching, marriage, family and life itself as we have made Jesus the center of our lives. There is no greater blessing than the sweet fellowship of other believers who love Jesus and are committed to His Word.

Acknowledgements:

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Bible Reference:

John 14



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