

Small Group Guide: Prophecy and Promise in Daniel



Opening Prayer

Begin your time together asking God to open hearts and minds to understand His prophetic word and to strengthen faith in His sovereign plan.

Icebreaker Question

What's something in your life that you've planned carefully, only to have it turn out completely different than expected? How did you respond?

Key Themes from the Sermon

1. God's Sovereignty Over Human Kingdoms

- Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the statue (Daniel 2)
- Four kingdoms: Babylon (gold), Medo-Persia (silver), Greece (bronze), Rome (iron)
- All human governments are temporary; only God's kingdom is eternal

2. The Danger of Pride

- Nebuchadnezzar's repeated struggles with pride despite God's clear demonstrations of power

- His seven years living as a beast until he humbled himself
- His ultimate redemption through humility

3. Messianic Prophecy Fulfilled

- Daniel 9:24-27 predicts Jesus' coming with stunning accuracy
- 483 years from decree to rebuild Jerusalem to Palm Sunday
- Jesus came to "finish transgression" and "make reconciliation for iniquity"

4. Future Hope Despite Coming Trouble

- Prophecies about the Antichrist and tribulation
- The stone cut without hands that destroys all kingdoms
- Jesus' return to establish His eternal kingdom

Discussion Questions

Understanding the Text

1. **What stood out to you most from this sermon?** Was there anything that surprised you or challenged your previous understanding?
2. **Nebuchadnezzar was given multiple chances to humble himself before God.** What does his story teach us about God's patience and persistence with people?
3. **The sermon mentioned that from man's perspective, the kingdoms look like a beautiful statue, but from God's perspective, they're ugly beasts.** What does this reveal about the difference between human and divine perspectives on power and government?

Personal Application

4. **Pride was Nebuchadnezzar's recurring struggle.** In what areas of your life do you struggle with pride? How have you seen God work to humble you?
5. **Daniel 9 predicted Jesus' first coming with incredible precision.** How does the fulfillment of this prophecy strengthen your faith in God's promises that haven't yet been fulfilled?

6. **The sermon emphasized that "even though trouble is coming, Jesus is coming back."** How does this hope affect the way you live today? What would change if you truly believed Jesus could return at any moment?

Going Deeper

7. **Daniel and his friends prayed together when facing execution (Daniel 2).** How does your community respond to crisis? Do you turn to prayer together as a first response or a last resort?
 8. **The prophecy about the Antichrist and end times can feel overwhelming.** How do we balance being informed about biblical prophecy without becoming fearful or obsessed with end-times speculation?
 9. **Daniel was faithful in a foreign land serving pagan kings.** What does his example teach us about living faithfully in a culture that doesn't share our values?
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Key Takeaways

Write these down or commit them to memory:

1. **All human kingdoms are temporary; only God's kingdom endures forever.**
 2. **Pride separates us from God; humility brings us into His presence.**
 3. **Jesus fulfilled prophecy at His first coming; we can trust He'll fulfill all prophecy at His return.**
 4. **God's forgiveness knows no boundaries—even Nebuchadnezzar, a cruel tyrant, likely found redemption.**
 5. **The same God who predicted events hundreds of years in advance is in control of your tomorrow.**
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Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge

Choose one or more of these to practice this week:

1. **Humility Check:** Identify one area where pride has taken root in your life. Confess it to God and to a trusted friend. Ask them to hold you accountable.

2. **Prophecy Study:** Read Daniel 9:24-27 and research the historical fulfillment. Write down how this strengthens your confidence in Scripture.
 3. **Eternal Perspective:** When you face a difficult situation this week, pause and ask, "How does this look from God's perspective versus my own?"
 4. **Prayer Partnership:** Like Daniel and his friends, find someone to pray with about a specific challenge you're facing. Commit to praying together at least once this week.
 5. **Kingdom Focus:** List three ways you're investing in God's eternal kingdom versus temporary earthly pursuits. What needs to change?
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Memory Verse

Daniel 2:44 *"And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."*

Prayer Focus

Close your time together praying for:

- **Humility** to recognize God's sovereignty over our lives and world events
 - **Faith** to trust God's promises, even those not yet fulfilled
 - **Courage** to live faithfully in a culture that doesn't honor God
 - **Hope** in Christ's return and His eternal kingdom
 - **Wisdom** to maintain eternal perspective in daily decisions
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For Next Week

- Read Daniel 10-12 to prepare for deeper discussion on end-times prophecy
 - Reflect on this question: "If Jesus returned next week, what would you wish you had done differently this week?"
 - Share with the group one way this study impacted your week
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Leader Notes

- Be sensitive to different views on end-times theology; focus on what unites rather than divides
- Encourage those who find prophecy overwhelming; emphasize hope over fear
- If someone shares about pride struggles, create a safe space for vulnerability
- Keep the focus on practical application, not just intellectual knowledge
- Remind the group that fulfilled prophecy should strengthen faith in unfulfilled prophecy

5-Day Devotional: Kingdoms Rise, But Christ Remains



Day 1: The Head of Gold - Recognizing God's Sovereignty

Reading: Daniel 2:31-45

Devotional: Nebuchadnezzar stood at the pinnacle of earthly power, yet God revealed that even the mightiest kingdom is temporary. The golden head would give way to silver, then bronze, then iron. This wasn't just ancient history—it's a reminder that every human achievement, no matter how glorious, is fleeting. What are you building your life upon? Career success? Financial security? Human relationships? These aren't bad things, but they're temporary metals. God's kingdom—the stone cut without human hands—is the only eternal foundation. Today, examine where you've placed your ultimate trust. Are you investing in gold that will tarnish, or in the Kingdom that will never end? Surrender your need for control and recognize that God alone orchestrates history according to His perfect plan.

Day 2: Humbled Like Nebuchadnezzar - The Danger of Pride

Reading: Daniel 4:28-37

Devotional: Nebuchadnezzar's greatest enemy wasn't another empire—it was his own pride. Despite repeated demonstrations of God's power, he continued to credit himself for his accomplishments. It took seven years of humiliation, living like a beast, before he finally looked up and acknowledged heaven's rule. Pride is insidious because it blinds us to our dependence on God. We think our achievements are self-made, our wisdom self-generated, our strength self-sustained. But every breath is a gift. Nebuchadnezzar's restoration came only when he humbled himself. Where has pride taken root in your heart? What would it look like to truly acknowledge that God is the source of every good thing in your life? Don't wait for God to bring you low—choose humility today.

Day 3: The Messiah Predicted - Jesus in Daniel's Vision

Reading: Daniel 9:24-27

Devotional: Five centuries before Jesus walked the earth, Daniel received a mathematical prophecy pinpointing the exact timeframe of Messiah's arrival. From the decree to rebuild Jerusalem's walls to Palm Sunday—173,880 days of divine precision. God doesn't operate in vague generalities; He works with specific, intentional purpose. Jesus came exactly when predicted "to finish transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity." Your salvation wasn't an afterthought or lucky accident—it was planned before time began and executed with perfect timing. When you doubt whether God sees your circumstances or has a plan for your struggles, remember this prophecy. The same God who orchestrated history to bring Jesus at the appointed time is orchestrating your life with equal precision and love.

Day 4: The Son of Man Coming in Glory - Our Eternal Hope

Reading: Daniel 7:13-14, 27

Devotional: Daniel saw beyond the beasts and chaos of human kingdoms to the ultimate reality: one like the Son of Man receiving an everlasting dominion. Jesus quoted this very passage during His trial, declaring His true identity even as He faced crucifixion. The rulers thought they were ending His kingdom, but they were actually establishing it. Every earthly kingdom—no matter how powerful or prosperous—will fall. Rome fell. Babylon fell. Every empire crumbles. But Jesus' kingdom will never end. This is your hope when the world feels chaotic and evil seems to triumph. The beasts may rage, but the Son of Man is coming on the clouds. Your citizenship is in an unshakeable kingdom. Live today with the confidence that comes from knowing how the story ends—with Jesus reigning forever.

Day 5: Living Between the Comings - Faithful in Troubled Times

Reading: Daniel 12:1-13

Devotional: Daniel received overwhelming visions of future tribulation, persecution, and chaos. His response? He felt queasy and didn't fully understand. Yet God's instruction was clear: "Go your way, Daniel." You don't need to understand every detail of God's prophetic plan to live faithfully today. We live between Christ's first coming, when He finished transgression and made reconciliation for iniquity, and His second coming, when He'll establish His visible eternal kingdom. This in-between time requires faith, not perfect understanding. Like Daniel, you're called to faithfulness in your generation, trusting that God holds the future. Don't become paralyzed by trying to decode every prophetic detail. Instead, live with urgency, knowing Jesus is coming back. Share the gospel. Love sacrificially. Pursue holiness. Your faithfulness today matters for eternity.