

Series Overview and Guides

2019-2020 ANNUAL THEME | SERIES 4

JANUARY-MARCH 2020

Objective

what we hope to see God accomplish in us through this study

We are at peace because we know the rest of the story.

STATEMENTS OF THE OBJECTIVE

"He said, 'Don't be afraid, you who are treasured by God. Peace to you; be very strong!' As he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, 'Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me.'"

—Daniel 10:19

When it all goes crazy
and the thrill is gone.
The days get rainy
and the nights get long.
When you get that feeling
you were born to lose,
Staring at your ceiling,
thinking of your blues

When there's so much trouble
that you want to cry.
The world has crumbled
and you don't know why.
When your hopes are fading
and they can't be found.
Dreams have left you waiting,
friends have let you down.

Just remember I love you,
And it'll be alright.
Just remember I love you
More than I can say.

Maybe then your blues will fade away.

—Rick Roberts
Just Remember I Love You

Premise

why we are studying this

People are terrified much of the time, feeling disenfranchised because they have no hope. As a friend wrote to me:

"The hopelessness of mankind isn't new. However, in the modern era hopelessness was falsely kept at bay by a worshipful belief in human ability. People could solve everything, no god needed, thank you. That has been stripped away in the 21st century, where tribalism and demanded obedience have eroded faith in humanity. Now there is nothing left to rely on.

In that milieu, Daniel's prophesies and visions shine as beacons of hope. By describing evil and its resolution, exaltation of believers by God's grace, and the eternal kingdom of God the Son, Daniel 7-12 grants needed perspective that calms us now and steels us for the future."

STATEMENTS OF THE PREMISE

"Those who have insight will shine like the bright expanse of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever."

—Daniel 12:3

Theme

what the study is about

God reveals to Daniel the events of the future. This truly is, as Dr. Walvoord wrote, the heart of biblical prophecy. Our understanding of the other prophets, epistles, and John's *Revelation* hinges on the truth revealed in Daniel 7-12. Studying this text and the attendant passages brings hope, peace, and change. Specifically, we are shaped and purified by studying apocalyptic prophecy.

STATEMENTS OF THE THEME

"But as for you [Daniel], go on your way to the end; you will rest [die], and then you will stand to receive your allotted inheritance at the end of the days."

—Daniel 12:13

"Daniel provides the key to the overall interpretation of prophecy...It's revelation of God has brought assurance to Jew and Gentile alike that God will fulfill His sovereign purposes in time and eternity."

—John Walvoord
Daniel, the Key to Prophetic Revelation

TIE TO ANNUAL THEME

Daniel is shaped for service, and his words become beacons of hope for the world.



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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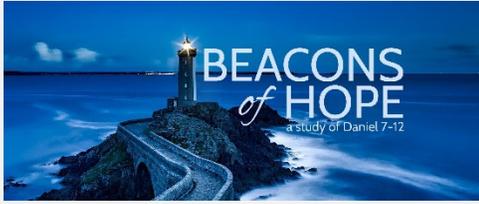
You are welcome to copy and distribute this study guide for your personal or group study.

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SERIES 4 | SESSION 1

GROUP DISCUSSION



ANNUAL THEME 2019-2020

NO STONE UNTURNED

SCRIPTURE READING

Daniel 7

KEY IDEAS

THEME

Daniel's vision in chapter 7 is the key to all biblical prophecy. Understanding it and embracing it serves to shape God's people, bringing peace and hope.

OBJECTIVE

We find hope and peace in God's plans.

LACK OF MEANING

"Many people today have adopted a similar mindset as those first readers of biblical apocalyptic visions. They have come to doubt there is a larger, unified story that gives meaning to their lives. American Christians haven't watched their temple literally burn [as did the Jews], but they have seen trusted spiritual authorities flame out through moral failures while mounting cynicism slowly snuffs out their confidence in religious institutions. People have been failed by churches, by politicians, by courts, by family and friends. They've seen that career success, wealth, and technology cannot provide meaning."

—Ryan Boys
Preach Apocalyptic Texts, Now!

PRAYER

Pray for each other this week, that we experience hope and peace because God is sovereign.

Use the back of this page to write prayer requests.

Session 1: The Heart of Prophecy

1. In Daniel 7:1-8, Daniel describes four beasts.
 - In the most common interpretation, which nation does each beast represent?
 - What historical aspect of each nation can be related to the corresponding beast?
 - Many scholars correlate the four beasts of Daniel 7 to the four parts of the great image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream related in Daniel 2. Why is this plausible?

2. Read Daniel 7:9-14 together.
 - Who is described as "the Ancient of Days"?
 - What power over the beasts does He have?
 - Who is described in verses 13-14? What was Jesus's favorite title for Himself?
 - What is given to Him, and how is it described?

3. Read the summary meaning of these things in verses 17-18. Then read the more detailed explanation in verses 25-27.
 - Whose kingdom will end? Whose kingdom is eternal?
 - To whom is the eternal kingdom given? Are you in that group?
 - If so, how does God's prophetic revelation of world events give you peace and comfort?

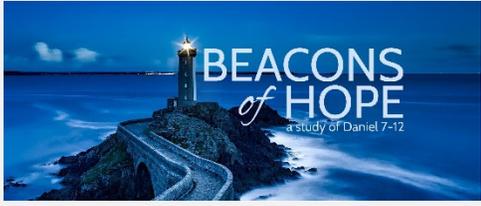
4. How should these revealed and explained prophecies impact us today as God's people?
 - How can we use these truths to share the gospel with others?
 - With whom do you want to share the gospel? We want to pray with you to accomplish this.



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SERIES 4 | SESSION 2

GROUP DISCUSSION



ANNUAL THEME 2019-2020

NO STONE UNTURNED

SCRIPTURE READING

Selected Scriptures

KEY IDEAS

THEME

Daniel's description of the little horn requires more explanation, which is thankfully provided by the rest of scripture, where he is called the Antichrist. And before we go to Daniel 8, we should stop and learn the rest of the story about the Antichrist. Thanks to this revelation, we can better recognize evil and set our hearts against it.

OBJECTIVE

We recognize and refuse to join evil.

THE BEAST'S PROGRAM

"The beast's program will include blasphemy and war. He will speak insolently against God.

God will control all, but Satan will empower the beast, who in turn will act on his own in blaspheming God. Men who join his army and fight for him will do so voluntarily, and they in turn will make martyrs of God's people who, though they are killed, will still be within God's protecting care!"

—Charles Ryrie
Basic Theology

PRAYER

Pray for each other this week, that we are not carried away with the error of lawless people, but that we grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Session 2: Antichrist

1. The "little horn" of Daniel 7 is commonly regarded as the same as the "Antichrist" of the New Testament.
 - Read Daniel 7:7-8, 11, 19-21, and 25-26. Compare that description with 2 Thessalonians 2:3-12 and Revelation 13:1-10.
 - What behaviors and characteristics are similar?

2. From the above Scriptures (or others), can we infer that the Antichrist will be
 - attractive, or repulsive?
 - wanted by people in general, or rejected by most?
 - a Gentile, or a Jew?
 - super-human, or ordinary?

3. How will the Antichrist attempt to minimize Jesus's resurrection (Revelation 13)?

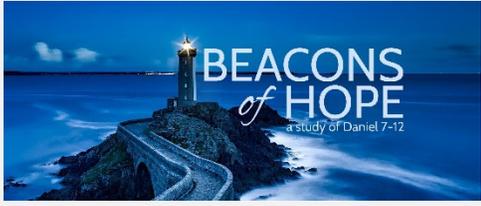
4. Who are sometimes referred to as the "unholy trinity"? (Revelation 13:1-2, 11-12).

5. What is the final outcome? Compare Daniel 7:11 and 26 with 2 Thessalonians 2:8 and Revelation 19:19-21.
 - What does this tell you about the war that evil wages against God?
 - How should this impact the way we live now? Read 2 Peter 3 together.



SERIES 4 | SESSION 3

GROUP DISCUSSION



ANNUAL THEME 2019-2020

NO STONE UNTURNED

SCRIPTURE READING

Daniel 8

KEY IDEAS

THEME

Daniel 8 represents a major shift. The language goes back to Hebrew and the events described here forward are seen through a specifically Israeli lens. Here's an overview:

- Chapter 7 contained a summary of the times of the Gentiles (dream vision in 553 BC).
- Chapter 8 covers Persia, Greece, and Antichrist in relation to Israel (vision in 551 BC).
- Chapter 9 predicts Jewish history from Ezra to the 2nd advent of Jesus.
- Chapter 10-11 reveal Gentile oppression of Israel.
- Chapter 12 concerns the new Roman Empire and Israel's deliverance.

OBJECTIVE

We are about the king's business.

THE KING'S BUSINESS

"In spite of his deep concern for the future, he went about the king's business: Daniel did not isolate himself from the culture around him but continued faithfully in his service of Babylonian society."

—The ESV Study Bible

PRAYER

Pray for each other this week, that we find peace in God's sovereignty and be diligent in our walk with Him.

Session 3: The End

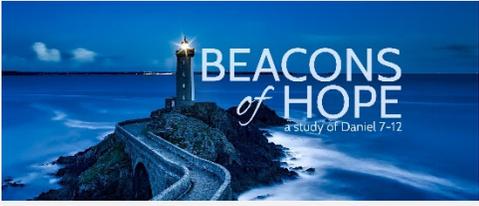
1. In chapter 8, Daniel records another vision and its explanation.
 - Describe the meaning of the ram, the goat, and the goat's horns.
 - Compare the latter king of Daniel 8:23-25 with the "little horn" of Daniel 7:8, 25-26.
2. What is the timeframe of the events in this vision of chapter 8?
 - When was the ram fulfilled? When was the goat fulfilled?
 - What about the latter king?
 - What did Gabriel say about the ultimate timing? (verse 17)
3. What does this tell us about the sovereignty of God over the nations?
 - Review Daniel 7:13-14, 27 and 8:25.
 - Read Psalm 2 and Romans 8:31-39.
 - Do we as believers have reason to fear, or to hope? Why?
4. Like Daniel in 8:27, we should be about the King's business. What does this mean for us?



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SERIES 4 | SESSION 4

GROUP DISCUSSION



ANNUAL THEME 2019-2020

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SCRIPTURE READING

Daniel 9:9-19

KEY IDEAS

THEME

Daniel joined in with God's prophecy about the future, employing things God loves – scripture study and prayer. Nothing is more powerful. Doing so, Daniel shows us the way to pray in response to scriptural revelation: with understanding of God, with honesty about sin in the covenant community, employing a good grasp of history, and with true comprehension of God's grace.

OBJECTIVE

We pray like Daniel.

THE ENEMY'S STRATEGY

"Whenever they [humans] are attending to the Enemy Himself we are defeated, but there are ways of preventing them from doing so. The simplest is to turn their gaze away from Him towards themselves. Keep them watching their own minds and trying to produce *feelings* there by the action of their own wills... Teach them to estimate the value of each prayer by their success in producing the desired feeling; and never let them suspect how much success or failure of that kind depends on whether they are well or ill, fresh or tired, at the moment."

—C.S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters*

PRAYER

Pray for each other this week, that we study scripture, confess our sins, and seek God's mercy for the sake of His name.

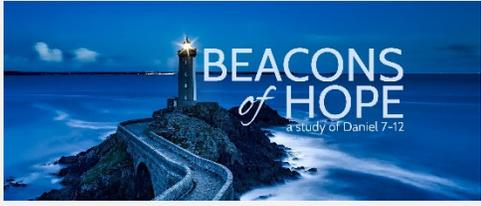
Session 4: Transform the World

1. Read Daniel 9:1-2. Daniel was reading and studying scripture.
 - Are you actively studying scripture? If so, share what you are studying and how. If not, what are some ways you can develop a Bible study habit?
 - What specifically did Daniel understand from his study of scripture?
2. Read Daniel 9:3-5.
 - What was Daniel's response to God's revealed plan?
 - As an example of his entire prayer, what did Daniel confess regarding who God is and what Israel had done?
3. In verses 4-16, what are some of the specific things Daniel confessed about the people of Israel?
4. Through the same verses, what did Daniel say about who Yahweh is?
5. What is the ultimate reason that Daniel gave in asking God for mercy?
6. Read Daniel 9:18-19.
 - How does Daniel ask God to respond toward His people, even those as described in question 3?
 - What are some elements in this part of Daniel's prayer that we can use in our prayers today?
 - Based on Daniel's example, what are some things we can we pray for our fellow believers, the body of Christ, around the world?



SERIES 4 | SESSION 5

GROUP DISCUSSION



ANNUAL THEME 2019-2020

NO STONE UNTURNED

SCRIPTURE READING

Daniel 9:20-27

KEY IDEAS

THEME

God lays out the core revelation about Israel's future in the times of the Gentiles. He reveals very specific details, including the intercalation of Messiah and the church age.

OBJECTIVE

We trust God.

GABRIEL'S ASSURANCE

"While Daniel was offering his petition to the Lord, the answer was already on the way by means of the heavenly messenger, the angel Gabriel. Daniel implies in verse 20 that the angel was sent at the very beginning of his prayer...

Upon arrival, Gabriel talks with Daniel and states that the purpose of his coming is 'to give thee skill in understanding.' Although Daniel's prayer was not directed to his own need of understanding God's dealings with the people of Israel, this is the underlying assumption of his entire prayer. God, in a word, wants to assure Daniel of His unswerving purpose to fulfill all His commitments to Israel, including their ultimate restoration."

—John F. Walvoord

Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation

PRAYER

Pray for each other this week, that we trust God in all circumstances. Use the back of this page to write prayer requests.

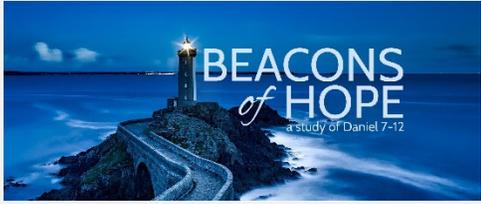
Session 5: Ch-Ch-Changes

1. Describe the biggest change you experienced in the past 10 years. Was the end result good or bad, and why?
2. Why do we resist change?
3. Read Daniel 9:20-27. In this section, Daniel is given a glimpse of some major future changes.
 - In verse 24, what are some of the hopeful clues about God's eternal plan?
 - What changes are described as occurring during the first "sixty-nine weeks" in verses 25 and 26?
 - What will happen to the Anointed One (Jesus Christ)?
 - What is in store for Jerusalem and the temple?
 - What will occur during the final "week" in verse 27? What is the commonly accepted interpretation of this verse?
4. What does all this mean for us today?
 - What does it tell us of the sovereignty of God?
 - What does it tell us of God's faithfulness to keep His word?
5. In verse 23, Gabriel said that this word was given to Daniel because he was greatly loved. As believers in Christ, what are some of the words God has given to us, the Church, because of His love for us?



SERIES 4 | SESSION 6

GROUP DISCUSSION



ANNUAL THEME 2019-2020

NO STONE UNTURNED

SCRIPTURE READING

Daniel 10:1-11:1

KEY IDEAS

THEME

This very long introduction speech reveals more than just details necessary for chapter 11. Daniel 10 exposes Daniel – and all of us – to the realities of what occurs in spiritual warfare. When God’s people pray, they participate in an unseen war zone.

OBJECTIVE

We battle.

A GREAT WAR

“The battle between Gabriel and the prince (demon) of Persia continued for three weeks until Michael, one of the chief princes of the angelic realm (cf. Dan. 10:21; 12:1), came to Gabriel’s assistance. Such angelic-demonic conflict indicates something of Satan’s power. While the king of Persia was fighting Michael, Gabriel was able to bring a message to Daniel concerning the future of Israel, Daniel’s people (cf. “your people,” 9:24). It was to be a revelation of the warfare (10:1) between Israel and her neighbors until Israel is given peace by the coming Prince of peace.”

—J. Dwight Pentecost
Daniel

PRAYER

Pray for each other this week, that we prepare wisely for spiritual warfare.

Use the back of this page to write prayer requests.

Session 6: The War Zone

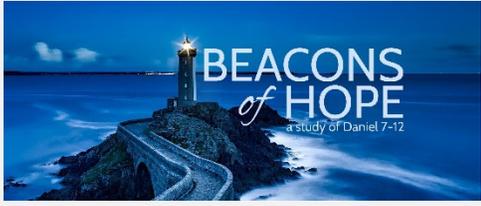
1. Describe a time when you questioned whether God heard your prayers. Why do we sometimes doubt that He hears us?
2. Read Daniel chapter 10 together. This chapter serves as an introduction to the revelation in chapters 11 and 12.
3. What happened to Daniel when he saw the angel and heard him speaking?
 - How many times did he require to be strengthened? How many times was he told to “fear not”?
 - What are some other biblical examples of angels saying, “fear not”?
 - What happened to Daniel’s companions who did not even see the angel?
 - How different do you think actual angels are compared to popular images of angels?
4. What did Daniel learn from the angel giving him a peek behind the curtain of our physical time-space?
 - What did he learn about prayer?
 - What did he learn about spiritual warfare?
5. Read Ephesians 6:10-18.
 - How are we as believers equipped to join the spiritual battle against us?
 - How often, and for whom, are we to pray in this battle?



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SERIES 4 | SESSION 7

GROUP DISCUSSION



ANNUAL THEME 2019-2020

NO STONE UNTURNED

SCRIPTURE READING

Daniel 11:2-45

KEY IDEAS

THEME

Daniel receives the message from God's angel, a description of conquest and disruption. With some confidence, we can assert that the first 35 verses have already taken place. The last 10 verses seem to be describing events yet to occur – probably during the reign of Antichrist.

OBJECTIVE

We are shaped by God's prophecy.

SUFFERING SAINTS

"Daniel 11 has much to teach the saints about suffering. The suffering of the saints appears, in this chapter, to be the result of human ambition, pride, and conflict. But in the prosperity of the wicked and the consequent suffering of the saints, God's plans and purposes are being fulfilled. These things must happen before the return of our Lord, and when they do take place, the saints are not only purged and purified in preparation for the kingdom, they are given the opportunity to shine forth, demonstrating the grace of God in their perseverance and proclaiming the grace of God in the gospel, so that even in these dark days some will be saved."

—Bob Deffinbaugh
From Here to Eternity (Daniel 11)

PRAYER

Pray for each other this week, that we are shaped by prophecy to trust our sovereign Father.

Session 7: A Stacked Deck

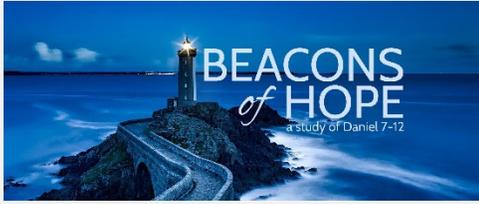
1. Read Daniel 11:2-4.
 - How does the angel describe what is about to be told to Daniel?
 - Who fulfilled verses 3-4, and what historical happening is described?
2. Read verses 5-9. These two dynasties are the focus through verse 35.
 - Which two historical dynasties are likely being described?
 - Why are these two (of the four historical dynasties) the focus of this section?
 - Describe some of the events in Daniel 11:5-35, and how Dr. Braudrick explained they were fulfilled historically.
3. When you study and understand how prophecy has played out in history, what does it tell you about our God?
4. Read verses 36-45. Which aspects make it reasonable to assume this refers to the same person variously described as the fourth beast of Daniel 7, the little horn of Daniel 8, and the beast of John's Revelation?
5. In verse 35, the angel says "...until the time of the end, for the appointed time is still to come."
 - What does this bold statement tell us about God's relationship to world powers?
 - How does studying this prophecy bring peace and comfort to God's people?
 - Why does God give us such long views of His plan? Read 2 Peter 3:8-9.



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SERIES 4 | SESSION 8

GROUP DISCUSSION



ANNUAL THEME 2019-2020

LEAVE NO STONE UNTURNED

SCRIPTURE READING

Daniel 12:1-4

KEY IDEAS

THEME

The angel's long speech of revelation completes in verse 4. This final section is remarkably binary, as each subject contains two major parts – some complimentary, others contrasting. The result is a gripping preview of things to come. It sparks a commitment to live out the grace and glory promised to believers.

OBJECTIVE

We live like ones whose names are in God's book.

MORE THAN A PROPHET

"In addition to receiving eternal life itself, those who are among the resurrection to everlasting life will be rewarded by glorification. They are described as 'wise' in that they were able to see through the unbelief and wickedness of their generation and put their confidence in the unseen eternal values of their faith. They behaved themselves wisely; that is, they were obedient to God."

—John F. Walvoord

Daniel The Key to Prophetic Revelation

PRAYER

Pray for each other this week, that we live faithfully to our Father who has written our names in His book.

Use the back of this page to write prayer requests.

Session 8: Shine!

1. Read Daniel 12:1.

- How bad will the "time of distress" be?
- What is commonly regarded to be the New Testament description of this time?
- How will those "whose names are written in the book" be affected by this time of distress?
- Is your name written in the book? If so, briefly share how you came to believe the gospel.

2. Read verse 2.

- What great event is described here?
- Compare Revelation 20:11-15. What further details about this event were shown to John?

3. Read verse 3. What should we be doing now, so that we will "shine like the stars" then? Compare James 5:19-20.

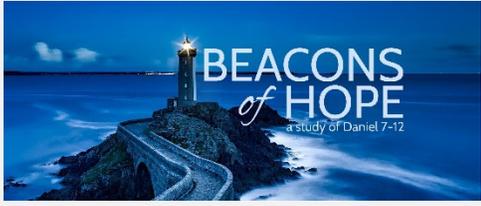
4. In verse 4, why is Daniel told to keep this revelation secure?



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SERIES 4 | SESSION 9

GROUP DISCUSSION



ANNUAL THEME 2019-2020

LEAVE NO STONE UNTURNED

SCRIPTURE READING

Daniel 12:5-13

KEY IDEAS

THEME

The angel has completed the prophecy spoken to Daniel in the vision received beside the Tigris River. Yet the story isn't finished. Two other angels are present, apparently as intrigued as we about scripture and prophecy (see 1 Peter 1:12.) In a manner we think of as very human, one angel and Daniel ask questions. In a very humane way, the chief angel replies. His answers deal with three great topics: the 3 ½ years of the great tribulation to come; the refinement of the believers and increasing perversion of the wicked; the resurrection inheritance awaiting those who trust God.

OBJECTIVE

We are purified.

THE REST OF THE STORY

"Today we can see as never before how God has fulfilled His predictions exactly in the past. This gives us great confidence as we anticipate His faithfulness to those promises that still remain unfulfilled."

—Thomas L. Constable
Notes on Daniel

PRAYER

Pray for each other this week, that we daily live in the light of our sure and promised future.

Use the back of this page to write prayer requests.

Session 9: You Will Stand

1. Read Daniel 12:5-7.
 - What question is raised about the end time events?
 - Reread Daniel 11:36—12:5 to review the events covered in Session 7 and the work of the Antichrist.
 - What specific things will the Antichrist do? (e.g., vv. 11:36, 37, 42, 45)
 - What is the result of his alliance with Israel? See 9:27 and 12:11.
2. What is the answer to the question of verse 6? What is the most common interpretation of this?
3. Read verses 8-13.
 - In his confusion about these matters, what important question does Daniel ask?
 - What does the angel say will happen during the final "time, times, and half a time"?
 - How does the angel answer Daniel's question? What does the angel promise Daniel?
4. Read Revelation 20:4 – 6 and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17. What common hope do we have with Daniel?

