

THE BOOK OF
DANIEL

SMALL GROUP GUIDES
FALL 2025

THE BOOK OF **DANIEL**

SMALL GROUP GUIDE

SEP 7, 2025

The Resetting of Your Faith

We are beginning a series from the Old Testament book of Daniel. This first message will serve as the introduction. It will not be from the book of Daniel but from one of Daniel's contemporaries, the prophet Jeremiah. Both 'Babylon' and 'Exile' must be redefined to understand the book's important message fully. The most helpful way to do that is through a key passage and prophecy from the book of Jeremiah.

Read Jeremiah 29:1, 4-14.

- What makes Jeremiah's words to the exiles in Babylon so revolutionary in their time (Jeremiah 29:5-7)? (see John 17:15-18)
- How do they challenge you in the way you live out your faith today? (see 1 Peter 2:11-12)
- How might Abraham's plea for Sodom reflect Jeremiah's words to the exiles (see Genesis 18:23-32)?
- How does this teaching redefine or reframe your understanding of God's call on your life (see 1 Corinthians 7:17)?
- What do these words say about what God most seeks from us in our relationship with Him (Jeremiah 29:12-13)?
- How does this teaching challenge you in how to better live out your faith today?

Praying together

God and Father, help me to seek you with all my heart and to serve your purposes wherever you have placed me today.

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SEP 14, 2025

A Wholehearted Faith

The book of Daniel opens with a crisis—the people of God living in exile in Babylon. And this time, there is no rescue. Things on the surface could hardly seem worse. Yet below the surface, to the eye of faith, God is as present and active in the lives of his people as he ever was back in Israel. It turns out the crisis was also an opportunity to exercise a deeper faith in the service of the larger purposes of God.

Read Daniel 1.

- Have you ever had an experience of exile in terms of your journey of faith? If so, what did you learn about your faith or yourself?
- Why might Daniel and his friends not have been surprised at the besieging of Jerusalem and the exile of its people (Daniel 1:1-2)? (See Leviticus 26:33-35; Deuteronomy 28:49-52)
- How is God's sovereignty demonstrated here, and how, despite the hard circumstances, can this be a source of courage for Daniel and his friends (Daniel 1:2)? (See Romans 8:37-39)
- How is God's providence demonstrated here (Daniel 1:9 & 17)? (See Proverbs 16:9; Matthew 6:26; Romans 8:28)
- What may be the purpose, beyond the Old Testament food laws, that Daniel sought to refuse the king's food here (Daniel 1:9-14)? (See Judges 6:36-40; Matthew 14:28-29)
- Where is God at work in your life today?
- Where is God calling you to make a stand today in your faith?

Praying together

God and Father, give me a greater ability to see you at work in my life and circumstances today.

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SEP 21, 2025

Living the Dream

We are in our third message in our Daniel series, which comes from Daniel 2. In Daniel 1, we learned that God gave Daniel a unique gift—a supernatural ability to interpret dreams. Most particularly, dreams or visions from God. This way of connecting with God is not how most of us think about our relationship with God today, but for the ancient nations of the world, including ancient Israel, dreams were seen as a place where God revealed himself and his purposes.

Read Daniel 2.

- What is your first instinct when things don't go your way or when unexpected trouble shows up in your life?
- What can you learn from Daniel's response to the unexpected trouble that comes his way here (Daniel 2:14-18)?
- Before Daniel presents the interpretation to the king, he takes a moment to praise God. What does this say about Daniel's faith, and how can it speak to yours today (Daniel 2:19-23)?
- What are the core theological truths shared here, and how central are they to the daily practice of your faith (Daniel 2:20-23)? (See also 1 Corinthians 2:6-10)
- What might the change in metals, as the vision progresses, suggest about the strength of the successive kingdoms in this period of history (from Babylon to Rome, from the time of Daniel to the time of Jesus)? What might this suggest about our understanding of human history (Daniel 2:31-33)?
- What is the meaning of the rock or stone that destroyed the image and then grew into a huge mountain that filled the whole earth (Daniel 2:34-35)? (See Psalm 118:22; Isaiah 28:16; Matthew 21:42; Romans 9:33)
- Where do you need wisdom from God today?
- How does God's sure future encourage your living today?

Praying together

Holy Spirit, give me the vision and strength to live more faithfully where God has placed me today.

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SEP 28, 2025

The Marks of Mature Faith

Daniel 3 details the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego getting thrown into the fiery furnace for refusing to worship the image set up by Nebuchadnezzar. In their response to this crisis, they show us the marks of a mature faith. We live in different times, but are no less challenged to demonstrate to our world what it means to honor God with our lives.

Read Daniel 3.

- Have you faced a furnace (a time of great testing) to remain faithful to God at any point in your life?
- What might be the reason for the stark contrast between the anger of the king and the calm nature of the response of these men (Daniel 3:13-16-17)? (See Philippians 4:6-7; 2 Timothy 1:12)
- What does this chapter teach us about the importance of our faith being tested? (See John 6:5-6; 1 Corinthians 3:11-15; Hebrews 11:17-19)
- How might the full answer of these men to the king challenge the experience of your faith today (Daniel 3:17-18)? (See Esther 4:15-16; Romans 8:37-39)
- Who is the fourth man in the fire, and what might it say about the nature of God's salvation and His presence in our lives today (Daniel 3:25)? (See Romans 8:17; 2 Corinthians 1:3-4; Philippians 3:10)
- How does Jesus' faithfulness encourage you to remain faithful today?

Praying together

Holy Spirit, help me to grow a deeper faith in Jesus that I might live more courageously today.

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OCT 12, 2025

The Truth for Every Person

Daniel 4 presents a powerful testimony from King Nebuchadnezzar who once ruled the known world but was humbled by God. This chapter begins with the king's personal declaration of God's greatness, followed by a flashback of how he came to that realization. Nebuchadnezzar reminds us God has a plan for every person, but pride can derail that plan. Through Nebuchadnezzar's fall and epiphany, and Daniel's faithful witness, we see that even in seasons of silence or suffering, God is at work.

- Can you recall times in your life when God has brought you down in life to lift you up? What happened? What was that experience like?
- Read Daniel 4:1-5. What does Nebuchadnezzar's proclamation at the beginning and end of the chapter tell us about his spiritual journey?
- Nebuchadnezzar acknowledges God's sovereignty over his life in Daniel 4:17. How was God sovereign in Nebuchadnezzar's life? How has God been sovereign in your life?
- Read Daniel 4:27-33. How did God humble Nebuchadnezzar? What might that look like in our lives today?
- Do you see God humbling individuals as judgment or grace? How can you tell the difference?
- Daniel makes a monumental statement to Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 4:27. What does this say about his role in Nebuchadnezzar's life? How do Daniel's words resonate with you personally?
- How does God remove pride in our lives?

Praying together

Partner up with an individual in your group of the same gender. Confess an area of your life where you struggle with pride and pray for each other.

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OCT 19, 2025

The Writing on the Wall

Daniel 5 presents a sobering moment in biblical history on the fall of King Belshazzar and the Babylonian Empire. More than a historical account, it's a spiritual wake-up call. Through the mysterious message written by God's hand on the palace wall, we see His judgment and sovereignty on full display. Belshazzar's downfall is contrasted with his father Nebuchadnezzar's redemption. These two figures in Daniel remind us that knowing the truth is not enough, we must respond to God's Word with humility and obedience. The story of Belshazzar invites us to reflect on our own areas of arrogance and consider the ways we may not be listening to God seriously.

- Share about a time in your life when you experienced the "writing on the wall" as a warning or judgment. What happened? What was it like?
- Read Daniel 5:1-6. What does Belshazzar's use of the sacred temple goblets reveal about his attitude toward God? What examples can you offer of similar attitudes towards God today?
- How does this instance of God writing on the wall with Belshazzar compare with Jesus' writing in the ground with the religious leaders in John 8:1-11?
- Read Daniel 5:18-23. How does Daniel compare Belshazzar with his father, Nebuchadnezzar? What might true heart-change and humility look like in our lives?
- When you hear the truth, "Your life is in God's hands," how does that make you feel? How was this truth different for Daniel and Belshazzar?
- How are you listening to God through His Word and prayer? How is He working in situations in your life?

Praying together

Pair up with 2-3 members of your group of the same gender. Share an area of your life that might be a warning or caution, like a "writing on the wall." Identify one step God might be asking you to take in response.

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OCT 26, 2025

Daniel and the Lions' Den

Daniel 6 depicts a familiar story from the Bible – Daniel in the Lions' Den. Often, readers focus on the human characters including Daniel, King Darius, and the satraps trying to trap Daniel. In the whole Bible and the book of Daniel, God shows Himself as active, interacting and rescuing His people. Daniel's hope and faithfulness are rooted in the promises of God. What we experience from this story is that God meets us in real life, including in our deepest fears.

- When was a time in your life when you felt scared or uncertain, but saw things work out in a surprising or encouraging way?
- Read Daniel 6:1–9. What observations do you make of the different people engaging in this passage – the satraps, King Darius, and Daniel? What do their actions and thoughts tell you about what they value and believe?
- Read Daniel 6:10. What does Daniel's response of prayer say about what he believes about God and His promises? Can you think of a modern-day example of someone's belief in God shaping how they live?
- What promises of God have brought you hope in life?
- Read Daniel 6:23–28. How does King Darius's response resonate with the other Kings in the book of Daniel, including Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 2:47, 4:34) and Belshazzar (Daniel 5:22–30)?
- What fears do you need to surrender to God?
- How would your life change if you believed that God is in control?

Praying together

Pair up with one or two others of the same gender in your group and pray as Daniel did. Set your minds toward God, your rescue, and spend a moment with him. Perhaps ask him for more trust in his control, or for rescue from something specific in your life.

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SMALL GROUP GUIDE

NOV 2, 2025

The Meaning of History

Daniel 7 marks a pivotal shift in the book of Daniel—from historical narrative (Daniel 1–6) to apocalyptic vision (Daniel 7–12). Daniel receives a dream filled with symbolic beasts representing kingdoms and cosmic conflict. The deeper truth reveals a world at war throughout human history, but God remains sovereign and just. The deeper theological truths of God’s sovereignty and omniscience (all-knowing) inspired hope for the original readers and for us today. Ultimately, Daniel 7 reminds us that while evil may seem overwhelming, God never blinks—He is always in control.

- How have you felt about engaging Apocalyptic literature in the Bible, including Daniel 7–12 and the book of Revelation? Confused? Curious? Passionate? Fearful? Anxious? Why?
- Read Daniel 7:1–8. A definition for Apocalyptic literature is, “Apocalyptic literature is a genre of religious writing that describes visions of future cataclysmic events, often revealing the end of the world and the establishment of a new, divine order. Key characteristics include symbolic language, visions and revelations, a cosmic dualism between good and evil, and pessimism about the present age contrasted with optimism for the future.” How does this definition shape how you read this passage?
- The four beasts in Daniel 7 depict the cosmic war within the world of then and now. How have you seen this truth play out in current events or personal experiences?
- Read Daniel 7:9–14. What characteristics of God are displayed in this scene?
- God never blinks. How does this truth shape how we live today, including our thoughts, motivations, and actions?
- How are you experiencing the difficulties in the world as a follower of Jesus on your way home (heaven)?
- How does this heavenly vision move you to praise and worship God more fully today?

Praying together

Pair with an individual of the same gender in your group. Share something personal or happening in the world that gives you anxiety or concern. Pray for each other.

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NOV 16, 2025

A Vision of Reality

Daniel 10 offers a powerful glimpse into the unseen spiritual realities that shape our world. Daniel receives a vision not of earthly kingdoms, but of a cosmic battle between good and evil in the heavenly realms. The passage reveals God as a divine warrior, fighting not against human empires but against spiritual forces of darkness. Daniel's response—mourning, prayer, and fasting—shows the posture of a faithful servant seeking understanding. Through this vision, we are reminded that spiritual warfare is real, and that God strengthens and esteems those who humbly seek Him.

- How has reading the book of Daniel changed the way you read the Bible and see the world?
- Read Daniel 10:1-14. Who are the key figures mentioned in the vision, and what do they represent?
- What do you believe about spiritual powers? How do you grapple with and understand the role of the Prince of Persia and Michael in Daniel 10?
- How does the context in Daniel 10:1-3 help you understand the passage? See Daniel 5 as context.
- Why is God portrayed as a warrior in Daniel's vision, and what does that reveal about His character?
- Read Daniel 10:15-20. How does Daniel's reaction to the vision reflect the weight of spiritual reality?
- Reflect on Ephesians 6:10-20. How does Paul's teaching on spiritual warfare shape the way we understand Daniel 10?
- How does recognizing spiritual warfare give us peace and hope in a world that's beastly?
- What spiritual disciplines help you through the difficulties of life?

Praying together

Use Ephesians 6:10-20 as a prayer. Pray it over your life, small group, and the people in your life.

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NOV 23, 2025

The Call of Every Believer

Daniel 12 closes the book of Daniel by revealing God's ultimate plan for history and calling every believer to live faithfully in light of the end. This chapter speaks of a time of great distress, the promise of resurrection, and the assurance that evil will be judged. It reminds us that life does not always unfold according to our vision, but God's purposes prevail. In a world that often feels faithless, Daniel models surrender to God's greater vision and trust in His promises. Our calling is clear: to root ourselves in the hope of the Gospel and lead others to righteousness as we await God's final restoration.

- What's one hope or dream you had earlier in life that turned out differently than you expected?
- Read Daniel 12:1-13. Imagine yourself as Daniel receiving this message. What do you think would be your thoughts, impressions, and feelings?
- How do the promises of judgment and resurrection in Daniel 12:1-3 shape our understanding of God's justice and mercy?
- How does Daniel respond to the mysteries revealed to him? (Daniel 12:7-13) What do you think his response teaches us about knowledge and knowing the future?
- What "vision" for your life might need to die for to experience God's will?
- Who is one person God has brought into your life to "shine like the brightness of the heavens" and lead righteousness in today?
- How does holding onto the promise of resurrection influence the way we face challenges, suffering, or disappointment?

Praying together

Reflect on and pray this prayer from Thomas Merton to close the discussion and series:
(See on the next page)

I have no idea where I am going.
I do not see the road ahead of me.
I cannot know for certain where it will end.
Nor do I really know myself,
and the fact that I think I am following your will
does not mean that I am actually doing so.
But I believe that the desire to please you
does in fact please you.
And I hope that I have that desire in all that I am doing.
I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire.
And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road,
though I may know nothing about it.
Therefore will I trust you always though
I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death.
I will not fear, for you are ever with me,
and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.

— Thomas Merton