Faithful in Babylon

An Eleven-Session Bible Study Through Daniel

Adapted from sermons by Rev. Shannon Canoy

Expanded Bible study and participant workbook

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Adapted from the 2026 Daniel sermons of Rev. Shannon Canoy

A Note for Readers and Leaders

Daniel moves between accounts of life in exile (chapters 1–6) and visions about kingdoms and God's final victory (chapters 7–12). These eleven sessions follow the order of the sermons supplied for this study. Read each biblical passage in your own Bible before reading the teaching. The lessons summarize and reshape the sermons for discussion; they are not transcripts. The references are suitable for use with the NKJV, Pastor Shannon's primary preaching translation. Scripture itself has final authority where a sermon or study offers an interpretation.

Two parts needed added attention. The uploaded sermon labeled Daniel 7–8 spends most of its time in chapter 7, so Session 8 provides a short reading of chapter 8 from the biblical text. The Daniel 9 sermon treats verses 1–19; Session 9 also introduces verses 20–27 without pretending they were fully taught in that message. Prophetic identifications and their timing are debated. We will distinguish the symbols that Daniel's own text explains from conclusions about modern nations and future events. This study includes new connecting explanations alongside the sermon adaptations.

The Story at a Glance

Daniel and his friends are taken to Babylon; they serve in pagan courts without worshiping pagan gods. God reveals that human empires rise and fall under his rule. Daniel's later visions revisit those kingdoms and look beyond them to the Son of Man, God's people, resurrection, and a kingdom that endures. The visions are not arranged as a simple diary after chapter 6: some were given earlier in Daniel's life. Read each chapter's date and setting before placing it on a timeline.

Session 1 — Standing Strong in a Compromising World

Read: Daniel 1:1–8; Hebrews 10:23–25.

Look closely: Notice the shape of Daniel's opening before making an application. The chapter names a real king, a real siege, and the transfer of temple vessels. It also repeats the idea that God *gave*: Judah's king into Nebuchadnezzar's hand, favor to Daniel, and knowledge to the four young men. The empire appears to control everything, yet the

narrator keeps drawing our attention to the Lord. The change of names and the royal training show how far Babylon could reach into their daily lives. Daniel's decision about food is one chosen response inside a situation he did not choose. Ask what the narrator emphasizes before turning this into a lesson about cultural pressure.

Daniel's story opens with loss. Babylon has besieged Jerusalem, taken vessels from the house of God, and brought young people into the king's training program. The text says that the Lord gave Judah's king into Nebuchadnezzar's hand. That statement does not excuse Babylon's violence. It tells us that exile did not put the Lord beyond reach. Daniel is in a foreign court, but God has not ceased to rule.

The young men are taught the language and literature of their captors, assigned royal food, and given new names. Learning the language of a culture is not the same as surrendering worship to it. Daniel draws a line when the food would defile him, and he seeks a way to honor God within a situation he did not choose. We do not know every reason the food was objectionable, so the chapter should not become a universal diet plan. Its emphasis is Daniel's settled loyalty to God.

Pastor Shannon's sermon asks a question that belongs to every generation: Who is shaping our identity? We may live and work among people who do not share our convictions. Faithfulness does not require withdrawing from them; Daniel spends his life serving in Babylon. It does require knowing whom we belong to. Prayer, Scripture, worship, and Christian fellowship help us stay rooted when other pressures are strong. Daniel's resolve begins in the heart before it becomes visible in his choices.

Discuss: What did Babylon change about the young men's lives, and what could it not change without their consent? Where is the difference between learning from a culture and giving it our allegiance? Which habits strengthen your faith before a crisis comes?

Trace the passage: Trace the three things God gives in Daniel 1. How do those gifts complicate the claim that exile means God has abandoned his people?

Practice: Name one daily choice through which you can honor God in the setting where you already live or work.

Session 2 — Ten Times More: Wisdom Without Compromise

Read: Daniel 1:8–21; James 1:5.

Look closely: Read verses 8–16 as a sequence of actions rather than a shortcut to a happy ending. Daniel resolves, asks permission, hears an objection, proposes a limited test, and waits for the result. The official is responsible for what happens to these young men and fears the king; Daniel takes that concern seriously. In verses 17–21, the narrator moves from ten days to three years and beyond, ending with Daniel still in service under Cyrus. The passage tells us about long obedience as well as one courageous request. It presents wisdom and learning as gifts from God without making education unnecessary.

Daniel's resolve becomes a respectful request. He asks not to eat the king's food, receives favor from the official, and proposes a ten-day test. The official has real reason to fear the king. Daniel does not treat that fear as foolish; he offers a practical way to address it. Conviction and wisdom belong together. We can state a boundary without demanding that everyone around us bear a risk we have not considered.

At the end of the test the four young men appear healthy, and at the end of their training the king finds them outstanding in wisdom and understanding. Daniel 1 explicitly credits God with giving them knowledge and skill. They still study, learn, and serve. God's gift does not remove the need for effort. Nor does this story promise that every believer who refuses compromise will receive a promotion or become ten times better at a profession. Later in the book, obedience leads Daniel and his friends into grave danger. God is faithful in both situations.

Their influence is a consequence of the way God works in this particular story. They do not pursue it by surrendering their identity. They can contribute to Babylonian public life while refusing worship that belongs only to the Lord. The chapter closes with Daniel continuing into the reign of Cyrus: faithfulness is sustained over years, through changing rulers and circumstances. What began as a choice about food became a pattern for a lifetime.

Discuss: How does Daniel show respect for the official while holding his conviction? What does God give the four young men according to verse 17? Why would it be misleading to promise every faithful person the same visible outcome?

Trace the passage: List Daniel's requests and the official's objection. Where does Daniel adapt his approach without surrendering his conviction?

Practice: Ask God for wisdom in one decision where both courage and kindness are needed.

Session 3 — Kings and Kingdoms

Read: Daniel 2:1–49, especially 2:20–23 and 2:31–45.

Look closely: The crisis in Daniel 2 begins with a decree of death that reaches even those who were not present when the king first spoke. Daniel asks for time, gathers his friends, and calls them to seek mercy. The answer comes in a night vision, but Daniel praises God before he speaks to Nebuchadnezzar. Compare the human inability of verses 10–11 with Daniel's confession in verses 27–28. The wise men were right that no person could produce this answer on demand; the difference is that God reveals what people cannot discover. The dream moves the reader's attention from an impressive statue to a kingdom God establishes.

Nebuchadnezzar's dream defeats the wisdom of his court. Daniel and his friends pray for mercy, God reveals the mystery, and Daniel's first response is praise. He tells the king that the revelation did not come because he was wiser than everyone else. This is the posture we need when studying prophecy: humility before the God who knows what we cannot know.

The king sees a great image with a head of gold, chest and arms of silver, middle of bronze, legs of iron, and feet mixed with iron and clay. Daniel identifies Nebuchadnezzar as the head of gold and speaks of successive kingdoms. Readers commonly associate the following empires with Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome, comparing later visions in Daniel. The stone cut without human hands strikes the image and becomes a great mountain. Daniel explains the central point: the God of heaven will establish a kingdom that will never be destroyed.

Pastor Shannon's message emphasizes God's sovereignty over rulers. That is the weight of the chapter. No empire is ultimate, including one that looks permanent in its own day. A person who trusts God's kingdom can serve responsibly under earthly authorities without turning them into saviors. We should not use the metals to predict a current election or assign every symbol to a modern headline. Daniel points us beyond the splendor of the statue to the stone that outlasts it.

Discuss: What does Daniel praise God for before he addresses the king? Which identifications does Daniel's own explanation make explicit? What does the stone teach us about the difference between human kingdoms and God's kingdom?

Trace the passage: Compare Daniel's prayer in 2:20–23 with his speech in 2:27–30. What credit does he refuse to take?

Practice: Pray for those who govern, and place your confidence in God's lasting reign.

Session 4 — Real Faith in the Fire

Read: Daniel 3:1–30; Luke 22:41–42.

Look closely: The herald's command in chapter 3 is repeated with its music and threat of punishment. The repeated details help us feel how public and unavoidable the demand to bow would have seemed. When the three men answer in verses 16–18, they do not attempt to calculate the chance of rescue. They identify the God they serve and the worship they will not give another. Nebuchadnezzar's response in verse 15 sets his power against theirs; the furnace becomes the place where that claim is tested. Read his final decree carefully too: his acknowledgment of their God does not make him a model of gentle rule.

The king's gold image turns power into a demand for worship. When the music sounds, everyone is ordered to bow. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego refuse, though the consequence is a blazing furnace. Their answer holds two truths together: God is able to deliver them, and even if he does not, they will not worship the image. This is faith fixed on God rather than on a guaranteed outcome.

Pastor Shannon distinguishes trust in God's ability from a claim that God must give us the result we request. We may pray specifically for healing, provision, or rescue. We can also submit our desires to the Lord's wisdom, as Jesus did in Gethsemane. The three men do not need to know the ending of their story to know what worship requires. Their loyalty remains the same on either side of the furnace door.

They are thrown into the fire, yet the king sees a fourth figure with them, and they emerge unharmed. Nebuchadnezzar describes the deliverer as an angel sent by their God. Christians may see a picture of God's presence with his people here, but the passage does not identify the fourth figure by name as Jesus. The miracle is real in the story, and it does not become a promise that every believer will escape suffering. The deeper assurance is that God's people can trust him in it.

Discuss: How is the king using public pressure to demand worship? What changes when we say “God is able” without adding “therefore he must do it my way”? What does the ending reveal about the king's power and God's power?

Trace the passage: Which repeated words and actions create pressure to conform? What exactly do the three men know, and what outcome do they leave open?

Practice: Bring one fear to God in prayer, and ask for faithfulness whatever the outcome.

Session 5 — Who Is the King of Your Life?

Read: Daniel 4:1–37, especially 4:17, 27–37.

Look closely: Chapter 4 is framed as Nebuchadnezzar's public testimony. He recounts the dream, Daniel's interpretation, its fulfillment, and his own praise at the end. Watch the movement of the king's speech: in verse 30 he says the city displays *his* mighty power; in verses 34–35 he acknowledges the Most High's rule. Daniel's warning in verse 27 links repentance with justice toward the oppressed, so humility cannot be reduced to private feelings. The chapter gives a full year between warning and judgment. God's patience is visible in the delay, and the king's response still matters.

Nebuchadnezzar can speak admiringly about the Most High while still claiming the glory of Babylon for himself. His dream of a great tree gives him a warning: the tree will be cut down until he knows that heaven rules. Daniel interprets the dream and urges him to turn from his sins and show mercy to the poor. The king is given time to respond. A year later he speaks as though his own might built Babylon, and the warning takes effect.

The story is about more than an arrogant man brought low. It is also about a God who warns, waits, humbles, and restores. When Nebuchadnezzar lifts his eyes toward heaven, his reason returns; he praises the King of heaven. Pastor Shannon's sermon asks us to consider the distance between being impressed with God and being surrendered to him. The king has seen mighty acts in chapters 2 and 3. Only now does his testimony name his own pride.

We should be careful not to apply the king's experience as a diagnosis for someone else's illness or hardship. Daniel 4 gives an interpretation for Nebuchadnezzar's situation. Our own call is to receive its warning about self-exaltation and its invitation to mercy. Whatever influence, skill, or authority we have is a gift for which we are accountable. Humility remembers the giver and treats those under our care with justice.

Discuss: What is the stated purpose of the king's humbling in verse 17? What does Daniel urge him to do in verse 27? Where is it possible to praise God with our words while claiming all the credit with our lives?

Trace the passage: Place Daniel 4:27 beside 4:30–37. How does the story connect pride, treatment of others, and the king's final praise?

Practice: Thank God for a gift you have been treating as entirely your own, and use it to serve someone.

Session 6 — When God Weighs Us

Read: Daniel 5:1–31, especially 5:18–28.

Look closely: Notice that Daniel refuses to let the writing on the wall become a spectacle. He begins his explanation with Belshazzar's history: the king had knowledge of Nebuchadnezzar's humbling but did not humble himself. In verse 23, Daniel contrasts lifeless objects of worship with the God who holds the king's breath and ways. Only then does he explain the words written on the wall. This order matters. A warning means something because it addresses a particular moral choice; decoding words without facing that choice would miss Daniel's point. The feast also turns sacred vessels into instruments of mockery, making worship part of the offense.

Belshazzar holds a feast and brings out vessels taken from the Jerusalem temple. His guests drink from them while praising gods made of material things. A hand writes on the wall; the king is shaken; Daniel is summoned to interpret. Daniel reminds him of what happened to Nebuchadnezzar and says he did not humble his heart although he knew the story. Knowledge has made him accountable, not immune.

The interpretation is severe: his days are numbered, he has been weighed and found wanting, and his kingdom will be divided. That night Babylon falls. Daniel's sermon draws out accountability, humility, reverence, and faithfulness. These are better questions for us than trying to identify an object today that corresponds exactly to a temple vessel. The central offense is that Belshazzar knew the Lord held his breath in his hand and chose to honor lifeless gods instead.

The chapter also shows a political transition. Belshazzar's offer to make Daniel “third ruler” fits a court in which another ruler held higher rank. The text calls Nebuchadnezzar his “father,” a word that can refer to a predecessor or ancestor. We need not build a precise family tree to hear Daniel's rebuke. The question for readers is whether we will respond to the light we have received while there is time to do so.

Discuss: Why does Daniel remind Belshazzar of Nebuchadnezzar? What is the contrast between the gods at the feast and the God described in verse 23? What truth do you know but keep postponing putting into practice?

Trace the passage: Why does Daniel rehearse the prior king's story before interpreting the writing? What does Belshazzar already know?

Practice: Respond today to one area in which God has already shown you what is right.

Session 7 — Faithful in the Lions' Den

Read: Daniel 6:1–28; James 1:2–4.

Look closely: Daniel 6 distinguishes a rule meant to protect the kingdom from a rule designed to trap a person. The accusers cannot find corruption in Daniel's public work, so they exploit his known practice of prayer. His open window and three daily prayers are described as habits he already had, not a display invented to provoke the king. Darius tries to rescue him but becomes captive to his own decree. Compare the king's inability to undo the order with God's act of sending an angel. The chapter asks what integrity looks like both when a leader has authority and when a law is misused.

Daniel is an experienced administrator under a new regime. Other officials search for corruption and find none, so they use his known practice of prayer to trap him. Darius signs a decree that no one may make a petition to any god or man except the king for thirty days. Daniel learns of it and continues praying as before. The crisis reveals an established habit; he did not invent a prayer life when threatened.

The officials' envy damages the court, Darius regrets his own decree, and Daniel is sealed in the den. At daybreak the king calls out and Daniel answers: God has sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths. The story declares God's sovereignty over a law no human court was willing to reverse. It also shows the integrity of a man whose public service and private worship belonged together.

Pastor Shannon is careful about the outcome. Daniel's rescue does not mean that every faithful believer will leave a dangerous situation unharmed. The same book has already given us three men willing to die rather than bow. Faithfulness means honoring God before, during, and after a crisis. We can rejoice in Daniel's rescue without treating suffering Christians as though they lacked enough faith to deserve one.

Discuss: What could Daniel's opponents not find in his work? How does verse 10 describe his prayer before the decree? What can we say about God's faithfulness when the outcome is different from Daniel's?

Trace the passage: What evidence does the story give of Daniel's integrity at work? What does the king want to do, and what is he unable to do?

Practice: Establish a modest, repeatable rhythm of prayer this week rather than waiting for a crisis.

Session 8 — Beasts, Kingdoms, and the Son of Man

Read: Daniel 7–8, especially 7:9–14, 17–28 and 8:15–27.

Look closely: Chapters 7 and 8 are visions given before the fall described in chapter 5. Note the dates in their openings before reading them as a continuous scene after chapter 6. Daniel 7 shifts the reader from the beast-filled sea to the court of the Ancient of Days; the verdict and the gift of dominion to one like a Son of Man are the vision's turning point. In chapter 8, the angel names Media-Persia and Greece, a level of identification not supplied for every beast in chapter 7. Put the angel's explanations in one column and your proposed historical connections in another. Daniel's distress at the end of chapter 8 invites reverence, not a rush toward certainty.

Chapter 7 turns back in time to a vision given during Belshazzar's reign. Four beasts arise, and an interpreter says they represent kings or kingdoms. A boasting little horn persecutes the holy ones, but the Ancient of Days sits in judgment and one like a Son of Man receives everlasting dominion. Pastor Shannon's sermon stresses the right ending: the boasting power falls; the kingdom belongs to God and his people. We need not fear the vision as though evil has the final word.

The sermon explores possible modern identifications for the lion, bear, leopard, and fourth beast. Daniel 7 does not name Britain, America, Russia, or a present-day coalition. Those identifications are proposals, not statements of the passage. A widely held reading sees a succession of ancient empires, related to chapter 2. Other futurist readings focus on a final form of the fourth kingdom. Compare the text's own explanations in 7:17 and 7:23 before assigning an animal to a nation on a map.

Chapter 8 adds a vision that deserves its own careful reading. Here the messenger explicitly names the ram as Media and Persia and the goat as Greece; the large horn gives way to four kingdoms. A later hostile ruler desecrates what belongs to God and attacks his people. Many readers associate part of this vision with Antiochus IV Epiphanes, while some also see a pattern foreshadowing a later opponent of God. The text's named kingdoms are firmer ground than our identification of each later detail. Daniel himself is left exhausted and troubled. That response can teach us reverence instead of confident speculation.

Discuss: What interpretations does the book itself provide in chapters 7 and 8? Why should modern national symbols not control our reading? What does the court scene in 7:9–14 reveal about the Son of Man's kingdom?

Trace the passage: Which kingdoms does Daniel 8:20–21 name? What judgments and promises does Daniel 7:9–14 state without naming a modern nation?

Practice: Write down what Daniel says, then separately mark what a proposed end-times chart infers.

Session 9 — Mercy That Leads to Repentance

Read: Daniel 9:1–27; Jeremiah 29:10–14; Romans 2:4.

Look closely: Daniel 9 opens with a believer reading an earlier prophet. Jeremiah's word about Jerusalem does not make Daniel passive or merely curious about dates; it moves him to fasting, confession, and petition. Mark each time Daniel says “we” or speaks of God's mercy. He shares responsibility with his people even while speaking as one whose life has shown remarkable fidelity. Gabriel's later message addresses the people and the holy city, but its symbolic timeline raises further interpretive questions. The prayer in verses 4–19 deserves as much attention as the calculation in verses 24–27. Scripture has drawn Daniel into worship before it gives him another vision.

Daniel reads Jeremiah's promise concerning the years of Jerusalem's desolation. His response is not merely to calculate. He turns toward the Lord with fasting, confession, and petition. He speaks in the first-person plural: “we” have sinned. He does not use the wrongs of an earlier generation to excuse himself or to escape solidarity with his people. He praises the God who keeps covenant and mercy, and he asks the Lord to act for the sake of his own name.

Pastor Shannon's message is centered on verses 1–19: Scripture awakens Daniel to God's faithfulness, and God's mercy draws him into honest repentance. That is a model for Bible study. Read a promise in context. Let it move you to prayer. Bring real sin into the light without trying to make yourself the hero of the story. Daniel appeals to God's compassion, not to the righteousness of his people.

The rest of chapter 9 introduces a prophecy of seventy “sevens” concerning Daniel's people and holy city. The passage speaks of an anointed one, the destruction of city and sanctuary, a covenant for one “seven,” and a midpoint disruption. In the futurist framework used elsewhere in Pastor Shannon's teaching, the final seven is future. The text does not itself call the intervening period the church age or name the maker of the covenant Antichrist. Those are conclusions drawn by comparing texts; they deserve a fuller lesson of their own. For this session, let prophecy deepen the question that drove Daniel to pray: how will God fulfill his promises to his people?

Discuss: What moves Daniel from reading to praying? How does his confession describe God's character and the people's conduct? What does Daniel 9:24–27 say explicitly, and where does a futurist timeline add interpretation?

Trace the passage: What does Daniel ask God to do, and what reason does he give? How does his prayer model a response to prophecy?

Practice: Pray through a passage of Scripture, including both honest confession and confidence in God's mercy.

Session 10 — Prayer and the Unseen Battle

Read: Daniel 10:1–21; Ephesians 6:10–18; James 4:1–3.

Look closely: The messenger tells Daniel that his words were heard from the first day of his mourning, though help did not arrive visibly for three weeks. We learn something about unseen conflict, but the passage does not tell us all we might want to know about spiritual powers or the reason for every delayed answer. Daniel is repeatedly touched and strengthened before he can hear the rest. Read the scene with attention to his weakness rather than treating him as a master of hidden information. The timing of an answer is not a simple measure of the quality of someone's prayer. The passage invites perseverance together with humility about what we cannot see.

Daniel mourns and fasts for three weeks. He sees a terrifying vision and is given strength to hear a message. The messenger says that Daniel's words were heard from the first day, although opposition delayed his arrival. The chapter shows a conflict beyond ordinary human sight and names Michael as one who comes to help. It does not give us a full map of the unseen realm or a rule that every delayed answer to prayer is caused by a spiritual prince.

Pastor Shannon draws a pastoral encouragement from the text: delay does not prove that God has ignored us. He also asks us to examine our hearts as we pray. Other passages he cites address cherished sin, withheld forgiveness, indifference to people in need, and selfish motives. Those are worthwhile questions, but they must never become a reflex explanation for another person's unanswered prayer. Daniel had prayed faithfully; the delay in his story was not evidence of his failure.

The messenger's repeated strengthening matters as much as the conflict. Daniel is weak, fearful, and unable to stand until he receives help. We do not have to pretend to be spiritually invulnerable in order to pray. The chapter invites persistence, humility, and confidence that God can be at work where we cannot see. Prayer joins our lives to God's purposes; it is not a technique to control the timing of his answer.

Discuss: What does the messenger say about when Daniel was heard? What does the chapter reveal and what does it leave unexplained? How can we examine ourselves without blaming someone who is suffering and waiting?

Trace the passage: What is revealed about the first day, the delay, and Daniel's need for strength? What explanations does the passage leave unstated?

Practice: Keep praying for one longstanding need, and offer practical care to a person who is waiting with you.

Session 11 — The Future of Things

Read: Daniel 11–12, especially 11:2–4, 21–35, 36–45 and 12:1–13.

Look closely: Daniel 11 describes a succession of conflicts with considerable detail, then moves into language whose historical and future referents are debated. Track the chapter's changes in rulers and settings without assuming that every verse names a single person. Daniel 12 turns from political struggle to the deliverance of God's people and the awakening of the dead. This is a striking widening of the book's hope: rescue is not limited to a furnace or a den in this life. When Daniel asks about the end, he receives limited information and is told to go his way. The book closes with faithfulness and promised rest, not a license to set dates.

The last vision spans conflict among rulers and kingdoms before turning to a severe time of trouble and a promised deliverance. Chapter 11 contains detailed struggles in the Greek world following the break-up of Alexander's kingdom. The contemptible ruler in verses 21–35 is often related to Antiochus IV; interpreters differ over where the passage turns most clearly to a future final opponent in verses 36–45. Pastor Shannon's sermon emphasizes the latter figure, the tribulation, and the hope of Christ's victory. We should honor the historical setting as we explore future fulfillment.

Daniel 12 speaks of Michael, a distress unlike any before, deliverance for those found written in the book, and an awakening from the dust to life or to shame. The resurrection is one of the book's great hopes. The message is more than the survival of a nation or the defeat of an evil ruler. God can bring his people through death itself into a future with him. Daniel is told to rest and to rise to his allotted inheritance at the end.

The sermon connects this time of trouble to the final tribulation and relates deliverance to the pretribulation gathering of the church. That timing is a theological synthesis involving other passages, especially 1 Thessalonians 4, not a direct identification in Daniel 12:1. Readers should also see that the chapter mentions those who suffer and are delivered during the trouble. We can present a conviction about the sequence while remaining honest about which text supplies each part.

The book closes with neither a named date nor a call to decode contemporary governments. It closes with a faithful servant told to go his way, rest, and trust the Lord's future. From the food in chapter 1 to the resurrection in chapter 12, Daniel has shown us how to live under God's reign when the world around us changes.

Discuss: Where do you see clearly identifiable ancient history in Daniel 11? What hope does Daniel 12 add to the earlier stories of rescue? What remains uncertain about the timing of the future trouble and deliverance?

Trace the passage: How does the hope of resurrection in 12:2–3 change the stakes of the conflicts in chapter 11? What does Daniel know, and what remains closed?

Practice: Finish by reading Daniel 12:13 and naming one way to remain faithful to God in your present place.

For Further Study

Read the complete biblical book of Daniel again in two movements: chapters 1–6 and chapters 7–12. Compare Daniel 2 with 7–8, and Daniel 9 with Jeremiah 29. For the Son of Man, read Daniel 7 alongside the Gospels; for the resurrection, read Daniel 12 alongside John 5 and 1 Corinthians 15. The companion study “When the End Comes” on this site examines some of the later prophetic questions in greater detail. Keep textual observations distinct from proposed historical and future identifications.

Source Note

Adapted from eleven Daniel sermons delivered April–July 2026, beginning with “Standing Strong in a Compromising World” and ending with “The Future of Things.” Session 8 adds a short exposition of Daniel 8 and Session 9 introduces Daniel 9:20–27 because the supplied sermons emphasize other portions. New discussion questions and applications were prepared for this study format. The downloadable PDF includes a participant notes page for each session at the back.

Session 1 — Standing Strong in a Compromising World

Read: Daniel 1:1–8; Hebrews 10:23–25.

Observe the passage

Trace the three things God gives in Daniel 1. How do those gifts complicate the claim that exile means God has abandoned his people?

Understand what it means

What does this passage say clearly? Where does an interpretation bring in other texts or assumptions?

Respond and pray

What will you do or pray differently because you read this passage?

Session 2 — Ten Times More: Wisdom Without Compromise

Read: Daniel 1:8–21; James 1:5.

Observe the passage

List Daniel's requests and the official's objection. Where does Daniel adapt his approach without surrendering his conviction?

Understand what it means

What does this passage say clearly? Where does an interpretation bring in other texts or assumptions?

Respond and pray

What will you do or pray differently because you read this passage?

Session 3 — Kings and Kingdoms

Read: Daniel 2:1–49, especially 2:20–23 and 2:31–45.

Observe the passage

Compare Daniel's prayer in 2:20–23 with his speech in 2:27–30. What credit does he refuse to take?

Understand what it means

What does this passage say clearly? Where does an interpretation bring in other texts or assumptions?

Respond and pray

What will you do or pray differently because you read this passage?

Session 4 — Real Faith in the Fire

Read: Daniel 3:1–30; Luke 22:41–42.

Observe the passage

Which repeated words and actions create pressure to conform? What exactly do the three men know, and what outcome do they leave open?

Understand what it means

What does this passage say clearly? Where does an interpretation bring in other texts or assumptions?

Respond and pray

What will you do or pray differently because you read this passage?

Session 5 — Who Is the King of Your Life?

Read: Daniel 4:1–37, especially 4:17, 27–37.

Observe the passage

Place Daniel 4:27 beside 4:30–37. How does the story connect pride, treatment of others, and the king's final praise?

Understand what it means

What does this passage say clearly? Where does an interpretation bring in other texts or assumptions?

Respond and pray

What will you do or pray differently because you read this passage?

Session 6 — When God Weighs Us

Read: Daniel 5:1–31, especially 5:18–28.

Observe the passage

Why does Daniel rehearse the prior king's story before interpreting the writing? What does Belshazzar already know?

Understand what it means

What does this passage say clearly? Where does an interpretation bring in other texts or assumptions?

Respond and pray

What will you do or pray differently because you read this passage?

Session 7 — Faithful in the Lions' Den

Read: Daniel 6:1–28; James 1:2–4.

Observe the passage

What evidence does the story give of Daniel's integrity at work? What does the king want to do, and what is he unable to do?

Understand what it means

What does this passage say clearly? Where does an interpretation bring in other texts or assumptions?

Respond and pray

What will you do or pray differently because you read this passage?

Session 8 — Beasts, Kingdoms, and the Son of Man

Read: Daniel 7–8, especially 7:9–14, 17–28 and 8:15–27.

Observe the passage

Which kingdoms does Daniel 8:20–21 name? What judgments and promises does Daniel 7:9–14 state without naming a modern nation?

Understand what it means

What does this passage say clearly? Where does an interpretation bring in other texts or assumptions?

Respond and pray

What will you do or pray differently because you read this passage?

Session 9 — Mercy That Leads to Repentance

Read: Daniel 9:1–27; Jeremiah 29:10–14; Romans 2:4.

Observe the passage

What does Daniel ask God to do, and what reason does he give? How does his prayer model a response to prophecy?

Understand what it means

What does this passage say clearly? Where does an interpretation bring in other texts or assumptions?

Respond and pray

What will you do or pray differently because you read this passage?

Session 10 — Prayer and the Unseen Battle

Read: Daniel 10:1–21; Ephesians 6:10–18; James 4:1–3.

Observe the passage

What is revealed about the first day, the delay, and Daniel's need for strength? What explanations does the passage leave unstated?

Understand what it means

What does this passage say clearly? Where does an interpretation bring in other texts or assumptions?

Respond and pray

What will you do or pray differently because you read this passage?

Session 11 — The Future of Things

Read: Daniel 11–12, especially 11:2–4, 21–35, 36–45 and 12:1–13.

Observe the passage

How does the hope of resurrection in 12:2–3 change the stakes of the conflicts in chapter 11? What does Daniel know, and what remains closed?

Understand what it means

What does this passage say clearly? Where does an interpretation bring in other texts or assumptions?

Respond and pray

What will you do or pray differently because you read this passage?