

Prophecies

Matt VanCleave

March 5, 2023

REVIEW LAST WEEK'S NEXT STEPS

What, if any, next step did you commit to last week, how did it go?

- ☐ I will examine my life to learn where I avoid the truth.
- ☐ I will take care of any unfinished business in my life.
- ☐ I will forgive someone who has hurt me.
- ☐ I will ask for forgiveness from someone I've hurt.
- ☐ I will address a sin I've been struggling with for a long time.
- ☐ I will give/serve in the way I feel God is calling me to.

THIS WEEK'S SERMON RECAP

Daniel 7 begins the prophecies. What these prophecies refer to have been debated by Christians throughout history. However, there are some unmistakable themes in this chapter. One of the themes is God's people will suffer; there will be opposition and danger awaiting them. Daniel's second big theme is an all-powerful God will put an end to his people's suffering at the end of time. In the meantime, as we await His coming, we are to keep ourselves pure for Him. We can't give up in the midst of trials and trouble, because eventually, He will make all things right.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Let's start our discussion with exploring the structure of the book of Daniel. The first six chapters of Daniel are filled with stories of corrupt kings, trials for Daniel and his friends, and encounters with God. Chapters 7 through 12 are then prophetic chapters, stories and dreams that carry warnings. Why do you think Daniel is split into these two categories? What does it teach you about the purpose of the book of Daniel?

2. The ending of Daniel is this glimpse into the future. Matt notes that throughout the Old Testament we see that “God wants his people to know about the future.” Why do you think God reveals these truths about the future?

3. The words highlighted in the last few chapters of Daniel highlights two truths, the first is that **we can always expect trouble**. How do you see this truth in the book of Daniel?

4. Matt notes that the first truth is seen throughout the book of Daniel, “Now here’s what is clear about this first section of Daniel’s vision — there are forces in this world that are hostile to God, and they’re quite powerful and very real. Therefore, the people of God can expect opposition. And danger. And suffering. And persecution.” These people understood trouble. What does it mean for you in your life to understand that we can always expect trouble? When has this truth been true for you?

5. Read together John 16:33. How does this verse reframe the truth that we can expect trouble? How does carrying this verse in your hearts help you understand or at least walk through seasons of trouble?

6. The prophetic words of Daniel don't just explain trouble, they reveal that while we will have trouble that God is working and that God will bring justice. The second truth, **God brings justice**. What do you think this meant to those hearing Daniel's words? What does this mean to you?

7. Read together Romans 12:17-19. What does this teach you about God's justice? What does this teach you about your faith journey?

8. Matt adds that the verses found in Daniel 7 and Romans 12 help us to understand that "The day is coming when the Ancient of Days is going to take the throne and justice is going to rule. Therefore, let it go. Let it go for your sake and for God's sake — forgive." How does this idea and truth shape your thoughts and actions?

9. Read together Daniel 7: 8-14. What does this part of the prophecy reveal to you about God and Jesus? How do you see God's power and purpose in these verses?

10. In the end of Daniel's prophecy we read about a God who wins, who sits with authority and power. What does it look like for you to rely on that God this week?

NEXT STEPS FOR THIS WEEK (COMMIT TO GROW)

- ☐ I will expect opposition, danger, suffering and persecution.
- ☐ I will not give up in the face of opposition.
- ☐ I will not give up when I experience suffering or persecution.
- ☐ I will not take revenge into my hands.
- ☐ I will forgive where I need to forgive and not hold on to resentment.
- ☐ I will guard myself from a bitter, revengeful spirit while working for justice.
- ☐ I will clean up my life in the area God has shown me.
- ☐ I will confess to God and another person to get things right in my life.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

- Daniel 7:1-14
- Daniel 7:21
- Romans 12:17-19
- Isaiah 1:18
- Matthew 5:8
- 1 John 3:3
- Hebrews 12:29
- 2 Peter 3:9

Spiritual Practice of the Week

- ❑ Worshipping in Song: at times, I have found that music allows me to connect with God in ways that scripture reading and prayer cannot. Singing worship emboldens us, reminds us, and allows us to reflect on deep truths of God. This week, spend some time worshipping God as you listen to *Another in the Fire*, a song about the power of God in our lives.

Prayer Request(s)
