

Points to Ponder

Everlasting Kingdom

Exile, Faithfulness, and the Book of Daniel

January 18, 2026

Daniel 7

1. Daniel Chapter 7 marks a significant shift in genre, moving from narrative, to apocalyptic literature. Discuss your experience with apocalyptic literature in the bible (as found in Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Revelation):
 - a. How familiar are you with this genre of writing? Do you tend to avoid it, or are you drawn to it? Do you find it interesting or meaningful, confusing or disturbing? Share your thoughts.
 - b. As you recall this week's sermon, what are some of the principles that should be kept in mind as you read these writings? Why should highly precise and literal interpretations of the text be avoided? What is your understanding of how apocalyptic texts can speak both to the particular time they were written, and more universally across the span of history?
2. Read Daniel Chapter 7 together. What stands out to you? What questions do you have?
3. Compare Daniel's dream in chapter 7, to Nebuchadnezzar's dream in Chapter 2. What parallels can you find between these two texts? In what ways can Nebuchadnezzar's dream be helpful in our interpretation of Daniel's dream?
4. Reflect on verses 1-8 (the first half of Daniel's dream), and verses 15-25 (the first half of the explanation of Daniel's dream)
 - a. What information does the explanation provide about the images found in this passage?
 - b. What feelings do the images here evoke?
 - c. In what ways do you think these images would have impacted Daniel, in light of his context (in exile, under Babylonian rule)
 - d. In what ways do these images speak to our context today? (ie: do you recognize the existence of chaos waters, or beastly kingdoms in our world today? Or perhaps even within your own life?)
5. Now, reflect on verses 9-14 (the second half of Daniel's dream), and verses 26-27 (the second half of the explanation of Daniel's dream)
 - a. The second half of Daniel's dream is drastically different from the first half. What changes do you notice?
 - b. What feelings are evoked as you read through this throne room scene?
 - c. In what ways do you think this vision of heaven might have brought encouragement and hope to Daniel?
 - d. Does this passage offer you any encouragement and hope for today?
6. Reflect together about what differences this passage reveals between the Kingdoms of the earth, and the Kingdom of Heaven.
7. Verse 13 describes how Daniel saw "one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven".
 - a. Compared to Daniel, how are we better equipped to understand this part of the vision?
 - b. Who is this 'son of man' and why is he important?

c. What hope does this revelation offer, both to Daniel, and to us today?

Pray for each other out of the items discussed. Pray for a deeper and truer understanding of God's Kingdom, and ask the Lord to lead you to participate more fully in that Kingdom. Pray against the influence of 'beastly' kingdoms, in our world, and in your own life. Pray for one another, that your minds and hearts would continue to be transformed by the love and grace of Jesus Christ, and that you would allow Him to shape you to be like Him, following His example of what it means to be fully human, and seeking after His Kingdom wholeheartedly.

To close, pray the Our Father together:

*Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one
Matthew 6:9-13*