

Daniel 7:17-28
February 2, 2025



CONVERSATION STARTERS

- What are some highs or lows you experienced this past week?
- What Scripture has been shaping you recently?
- Where have you seen God moving in your life this week?
- What did you hear in today's sermon OR read in today's passage that you would like to discuss?
- What did you learn about yourself in today's sermon/passage?
- What did you learn about God in today's sermon/passage?
- What convicted you as you listened to today's sermon OR read in today's passage?

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Rock-Paper-Scissors Tournament

Step-by-Step Instructions:

1. Review the rules of rock-paper-scissors.
2. Pair Up Participants: Randomly pair up the students. Each pair simultaneously plays a best-of-three series. The first to win two rounds moves on. Winners advance to the next round, and losers are eliminated. Repeat the best-of-three format for each round. The winner of the final round is crowned the tournament champion. Consider providing a small prize for this person.

Teaching Moment:

Today, we played the classic game rock, paper, scissors. This game relies mostly on luck. The only way to play more skillfully would be if we knew the future and could predict our opponent's choice, which would allow us to always win. Today, we're continuing our study of the book of Daniel and learning about the prophecies it contains. In our passage today, Daniel gets a glimpse of the future. We can learn from what Daniel saw to better prepare for our own futures—not necessarily in rock, paper, scissors but definitely in our faith! (Spoiler alert: Jesus already won, and we get in on the victory!)

DISCUSSION

 ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ DANIEL 7:17-28.

What promise did the angel give in these verses?

How was this to be an encouragement for God's people in the face of approaching hardship?

Revisit the description of the fourth beast and the horn starting in Daniel 7:7. How did that verse describe the beast?

Daniel recapped this in 7:19-22 and added new detail. What new description did Daniel add?

How does the description of the beast align with worldly systems of power?

What does verse 26 mean when it says, "his dominion will be taken away"?

What did the angel describe in verse 27? How does this point us to the eternal kingdom of God?

How did Daniel respond to the vision from God?

What do you make of Daniel keeping the matter to himself?

What can we learn from this response?

GOING DEEPER

How has studying prophecy in Daniel helped give you more confidence in reading difficult parts of God's Word?

Why is it important that we continue to engage with God's Word in its entirety, even when it's difficult?

APPLICATION

What further questions do you have about this text? How can we trust God even when we don't have all the answers?

How can we support one another as we seek to learn God's Word and trust God's truth in every season?

How does Daniel chapter 7 give you hope for the future?

PRAYER

Thank God for the hope we see in the Bible. Praise Him for being in charge of everything. Ask Him to strengthen your faith and give you understanding as we continue to read prophecy in the book of Daniel.

LOOKING AHEAD

Encourage your group to look ahead to next week's scripture passage as we continue our study of Daniel.

February 9, 2025 --- Daniel 8

COMMENTARY

Daniel 7:17-28

One of the heavenly attendants explained the significance of the vision to Daniel. The four beasts, like the statue seen in Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Dan. 2), represented four successive empires that would rule the earth. The ten horns of the fourth beast, which was of particular interest to Daniel, represented ten kings who would arise from the fourth empire. The little horn symbolized another ruler, who would supplant three of the ten. This little horn would oppose God and persecute His people for a specified period of time (perhaps three and a half years; compare "a time, times and half a time," 7:25). After this the Lord would destroy this ruler and establish His kingdom.

As in chapter 2, interpreters differ about the identification of the four kingdoms. On analogy with chapter 2, the lion probably represents Babylon. The bear is often associated with the Medo-Persian Empire, with the three ribs understood as symbols of its three major victims, Lydia, Babylon, and Egypt. The leopard may very well represent Greece, its four heads reflecting the fourfold division of Alexander's kingdom after his death (8:8, 21-22). The final beast may represent Rome, with its ten horns symbolizing a later manifestation of this empire prior to the coming of God's kingdom. In this case the little horn may be equated with the New Testament figure of the Antichrist. However, as with chapter 2, others identify the successive kingdoms as Babylon, Media, Persia, and Greece, with the little horn being associated with Antiochus Epiphanes (see Dan. 8; 11).

The identification of the “one like a son of man” has also occasioned much debate. Many see the title as messianic. Others understand the figure to represent humanity, God’s chosen people, or angelic beings (with Michael sometimes being specified as the angel in view).