

courage not compromise

Daniel 1

- **BEFORE the growth group gathers**

Read Daniel chapter 1 and make some notes



What shines out?



What is hard to understand?

- **WHEN the growth group gathers**

Read Daniel chapter 1 out loud (allocate parts to different group members [narrator, the king, Daniel etc] to bring the reading to life)

Close your Bibles and as a group retell the story. Focus on the time, characters and events. What problem arises and is resolved in this chapter?

What emotions and feelings do you think would have been significant for Daniel and his friends?

Daniel 1.1-2: At what point in Israel's history is Daniel set? (if you have time skim Lamentations chapter 1 to see what the Israelites were thinking and feeling)

Daniel 1.3-7: What did it mean for Israelites to live under King Nebuchadnezzar?

In what ways is your experience as a Christian like Daniel's?

Daniel 1.8-21: Why do you think Daniel refused to eat the king's food?

Things are not as they seem. Discuss the points of contrast between the royal official and Daniel:

thinking through **courage not compromise...**

- What does this chapter teach you about God?
- What does this chapter anticipate about the Kingdom of Jesus? (read John 16.29-33)
- How does this chapter challenge and/or strengthen your thinking?
- How can this chapter challenge and/or strengthen your living?

Prayer - take a moment to reflect on what you've learned . Compose a prayer using the following headings and then offer your prayers together:

Adoration

Confession

Thanksgiving

Supplication

revealer of mysteries

Daniel 2

- **BEFORE the growth group gathers**

Read Daniel chapter 2 and make some notes



What shines out?



What is hard to understand?

- **WHEN the growth group gathers**

Review chapter 1. During the week were you conscious of how last week's study shaped your thinking and/or living?

Read Daniel chapter 2 out loud (allocate parts to different group members [narrator, the king, Daniel etc] to bring the reading to life)

Close your Bibles and as a group retell the story. Focus on the time, characters and events. What problem arises and is resolved in this chapter?

Daniel 2.1-13: Discuss the effect of the dream on Nebuchadnezzar and his wise men.

Daniel 2.14-30: Discuss the contrasting effect the dream has on Daniel.

Together make a list of everything these verses reveal about God.

Daniel 2.31-45: What is the meaning of the dream? Which kingdom is most important? Why?

Daniel 2.46-49 What does Nebuchadnezzar realize about God?

Discuss your greater appreciation of God in the light of the gospel and it's greater revelation of mysteries.

thinking through the **revealer of mysteries...**

- What does this chapter teach you about God?
- What does this chapter anticipate about the Kingdom of Jesus? (read Ephesians 3.1-13)
- How does this chapter challenge and/or strengthen your thinking?
- How can this chapter challenge and/or strengthen your living?

Prayer - take a moment to reflect on what you've learned . Compose a prayer using the following headings and then offer your prayers together:

Adoration

Confession

Thanksgiving

Supplication

able to save

Daniel 3

- **BEFORE the growth group gathers**

Read Daniel chapter 3 and make some notes



What shines out?



What is hard to understand?

- **WHEN the growth group gathers**

Review chapter 2. During the week were you conscious of how last week's study shaped your thinking and/or living?

Read Daniel chapter 3 out loud (allocate parts to different group members [narrator, the king, Daniel etc] to bring the reading to life)

Close your Bibles and as a group retell the story. Focus on the time, characters and events. What problem arises and is resolved in this chapter?

Daniel 3.1-7: Who is King? What does he do? What does he command?

Daniel 3.8-18: What motivation might prompt the accusation against the three Jews?

How do these followers of God respond to the king's command? Why?

Daniel 3.19-30: Discuss this amazing example of salvation and the relationship between faith and obedience that the three men displayed.

Read Hebrews 11.32-12.3. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego are part of a great cloud of witnesses who lived by faith. Discuss how God's story in his Word equips and strengthens you to not bow to demands to do things that are contrary to living God's way. Christians living in Australia are relatively free to live God's way but this is not so in many areas of the world. Spend some time discussing what you know of the 'persecuted church' and remember these brothers and sisters in your prayers.

thinking through '**able to save**'...

- What does this chapter teach you about God?
- What does this chapter anticipate about the Kingdom of Jesus? (read Romans 8.18, 28-39)
- How does this chapter challenge and/or strengthen your thinking?
- How can this chapter challenge and/or strengthen your living?

Prayer - take a moment to reflect on what you've learned. Compose a prayer using the following headings and then offer your prayers together:

Adoration

Confession

Thanksgiving

Supplication

sovereign over the kings of men

Daniel 4

- BEFORE the growth group gathers
Read Daniel chapter 4 and make some notes



What shines out?



What is hard to understand?

- WHEN the growth group gathers

Review chapter 3. During the week were you conscious of how last week's study shaped your thinking and/or living?

Read Daniel chapter 4 out loud (allocate parts to different group members [narrator, the king, Daniel etc] to bring the reading to life)

Close your Bibles and as a group retell the story. Focus on the time, characters and events. What problem arises and is resolved in this chapter?

Daniel 4:5-33: King Nebuchadnezzar was terrified by a dream that warned him of the example God would make of him. What prompted Nebuchadnezzar's pride?

Why is Nebuchadnezzar's pride so disappointing at this point in the story?

What is the point of the dream and what God did to Nebuchadnezzar?

Daniel 4:1-4, 34-37: It seems this whole account is a written auto-biographical reflection from Nebuchadnezzar to be shared with 'all the people of the world'. It reads like a letter beginning and ending with the praise of the Most High. Reflect together on how incredibly wonderful this was for Nebuchadnezzar personally and for God's mission to the world. How encouraging would this have been to God's people back then, and is it for us now?

Thinking through **sovereign over the kings of men...**

- What does this chapter teach you about God?
- What does this chapter anticipate about the Kingdom of Jesus? (read Philippians 2:1-11)
- How does this chapter challenge and/or strengthen your thinking?
- How can this chapter challenge and/or strengthen your living?

Prayer - take a moment to reflect on what you've learned . Compose a prayer using the following headings and then offer your prayers together:

Adoration

Confession

Thanksgiving

Supplication

in his hands

Daniel 5

- BEFORE the growth group gathers
Read Daniel chapter 5 and make some notes



What shines out?



What is hard to understand?

- WHEN the growth group gathers

Review chapter 4. During the week were you conscious of how last week's study shaped your thinking and/or living?

Read Daniel chapter 5 out loud (allocate parts to different group members [narrator, the king, Daniel etc] to bring the reading to life)

Close your Bibles and as a group retell the story. Focus on the time, characters and events. What problem arises and is resolved in this chapter?

Daniel 5.1-4: What has changed in the kingdom of Babylon?

Daniel 5.5-9: What terrified the King?

Daniel 5.10-24: How do you feel towards Belshazzar in light of what you know about his father?

Why did the hand write on the wall?

Daniel 5.25-30: What was the meaning of the writing?

What event immediately took place and how does this fulfil the writing on the wall and Nebuchadnezzar's dream in chapter 2?

thinking through **in his hands...**

- What does this chapter teach you about God?
- What does this chapter anticipate about the Kingdom of Jesus? (Read Luke 12.4-9)
- How does this chapter challenge and/or strengthen your thinking?
- How can this chapter challenge and/or strengthen your living?

Prayer - take a moment to reflect on what you've learned . Compose a prayer using the following headings and then offer your prayers together:

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Thanksgiving

Supplication

the living God of forever

Daniel 6

- BEFORE the growth group gathers
Read Daniel chapter 6 and make some notes



What shines out?



What is hard to understand?

- WHEN the growth group gathers

Review chapter 5. During the week were you conscious of how last week's study shaped your thinking and/or living?

Read Daniel chapter 6 out loud (allocate parts to different group members [narrator, the king, Daniel etc] to bring the reading to life)

Close your Bibles and as a group retell the story. Focus on the time, characters and events. What problem arises and is resolved in this chapter?

Daniel 6.1-12: A new king but an old problem. Who is now king? What does he command? What has motivated the trap? If this feels a bit like *de ja vu* go back and compare the similarities with chapter 3:

Daniel 6.13-18: King Darius' edict is different to Nebuchadnezzar's. Nebuchadnezzar tried to force God's people to **act** in a way contrary to living God's way. King Darius tried to force God's people to **not act** in line with God's ways. King Darius also reacted quite differently to King Nebuchadnezzar's prideful anger. Yet even the king couldn't save Daniel from the trap. How did Daniel respond to the king's command? Why?

Daniel 6.19-28: Discuss this amazing example of salvation and the relationship between faith and obedience that Daniel displayed.

Reflect in wonder at the way God's mission to the world again advanced through the evangelistic witness of a foreign king.

Verse 28 is a tantalizing note to finish on because of what has been revealed in Daniel so far. What are you expecting will happen next?

thinking through **the living God of forever...**

- What does this chapter teach you about God?
- What does this chapter anticipate about the Kingdom of Jesus? (read Eph 1.15-23)
- What application does this chapter make to your thinking?
- What application does this chapter make to your living?

Prayer - take a moment to reflect on what you've learned . Compose a prayer using the following headings and then offer your prayers together:

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