

DISCOVERY QUESTIONS

Daniel 2
Stand Strong Series
March 3/4, 2018

Main Idea:

God reveals what we need to know in order to prepare us for what is ahead.

Discovery Questions

1. What's one of the biggest "dream come true" moments you've had in life? Perhaps meeting a famous celebrity, going on a dream vacation, or getting a dream job. How did the fulfillment of that "dream" match the expectations you had for it?

This week, we continue our series from the book of Daniel in the Bible. We'll look at the second story in the book of Daniel, told in Daniel 2. This is a long story, and for the sake of our study, we will focus on just a portion of it—Daniel 2:27-45.

2. Read Daniel 2:27-45. What do we learn about God's sovereign plan for the world in this passage? Observe as many things as you can.

3. When life gets difficult, what different things do people turn to in order to find hope? How well do those things work for them?

4. A key insight revealed in the book of Daniel is the understanding that God has a sovereign plan worked out for this universe—that there is a glorious purpose to which all of this is leading. Though life may get difficult for seasons of time, things will turn out perfectly in the end.

- a. When things get difficult for you, what gives you hope?
- b. How often do you think about the hope of heaven and God's sovereign plan for the universe when you go through difficult times? Why do you think that is?
- c. How can knowing that the whole world is under God's control and leading to a glorious outcome impact the way you look at your daily struggles? How can you be reminded of this on a daily basis? What would get in the way of truly embracing this?

5. Have you ever considered that people around us may learn something significant about our faith from how "hopeful" we are even in difficult circumstances? What are people learning from your "hopefulness" about our God? How can we express our hopefulness to others in a genuine—not manufactured—way, even in the midst of difficult circumstances?

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DISCOVERY QUESTIONS

Leader Guide

1. What's one of the biggest "dream come true" moments you've had in life? Perhaps meeting a famous celebrity, going on a dream vacation, or getting a dream job. How did the fulfillment of that "dream" match the expectations you had for it?

This is a "lighter" question designed to get the conversation going. Spend about 5-7 minutes on this question.

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2. Read Daniel 2:27-45. What do we learn about God's sovereign plan for the world in this passage? Observe as many things as you can.

Nebuchadnezzar's dream is a picture of the large plan that God has for this world. As commonly interpreted, each part of the statue is a different part of the unfolding future and represents a different earthly kingdom, leading up to the glorious heavenly kingdom:

- *The Babylonian Kingdom (head of pure gold)*
- *The Persian Kingdom (breast and arms of silver)*
- *The Greek Kingdom (belly and thighs of brass)*
- *And the Roman Empire (legs of iron, and feet and toes of part iron and part baked clay).*

We learn from Nebuchadnezzar's dream that God is in complete control of the circumstances of this life. There is nothing that can be done to thwart God's plan (Daniel 2:44). This doesn't mean that everything will be great; things may get tough before they get better. But still God is in control and eventually He will establish a Kingdom that He Himself will rule.

Spend 10-12 minutes on this question.

3. When life gets difficult, what different things do people turn to in order to find hope? How well do those things work for them?

For part "a," there are many different things: some people like to "check out" and turn to TV or a favorite book; some people like to plan a getaway or vacation for the future; some people turn to the internet to try and research an illness, for example, as a way to find hopeful solutions; other people turn to friends and family members and still other people turn to God.

Spend 7-10 minutes on this question in its entirety.

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4. A key insight revealed in the book of Daniel is the understanding that God has a sovereign plan worked out for this universe—that there is a glorious purpose to which all of this is leading. Though life may get difficult for seasons of time, things will turn out perfectly in the end.

- a. **When things get difficult for you, what gives you hope?**
- b. **How often do you think about the hope of heaven and God’s sovereign plan for the universe when you go through difficult times? Why do you think that is?**
- c. **How can knowing that the whole world is under God’s control and leading to a glorious outcome impact the way you look at your daily struggles? How can you be reminded of this on a daily basis? What would get in the way of truly embracing this?**

For part “b,” sometimes it’s hard to put our hope in heaven because it is so intangible—it’s “out there” as opposed to some of the more immediate “fixes” which are right here. That’s why it’s so important to constantly remind ourselves of—and perhaps even memorize—the Scriptures that speak about heaven and God’s plan for our future.

Spend about 10-12 minutes on this question in its entirety.

5. Have you ever considered that people learn something significant about our faith from how “hopeful” we are even in difficult circumstances? What are people learning from your “hopefulness” about our God? How can we express “hopefulness” to others in a genuine—and not manufactured way—even in the midst of difficult circumstances?

Christians are to be the most “hopeful” people on this earth, because we know that no matter what is going on around us, there is a glorious end where everything will be set right. If we are always down, moping about our circumstances, we give a negative impression to others about what we believe and the hope that we have. This does not mean that we can’t grieve; of course we are still saddened by what goes on around us, the loss of loved ones, etc., and so we do grieve deeply. But underlying all of that is this hope that we have.

Spend 7-10 minutes on this question.