AN EVERLASTING DOMINION

unit 16 | session 4

CHRIST CONNECTION

Daniel saw the coming of the Son of Man who would be given dominion over an everlasting kingdom of every people, nation, and language. Jesus is the Son of Man, the King of kings, who purchased a people for God through His life, death, and resurrection.

EVERLASTING KINGDOM

This week, we're covering the passages and main points below. But we encourage you to dig in and read all of the content on this timeline.

Daniel 7–12

WORLDLY KINGDOMS ARE TEMPORARY

DANIEL 7:1-8

1 In the first year of King Belshazzar of Babylon, Daniel had a dream with visions in his
mind as he was lying in his bed. He wrote down the dream, and here is the summary of his
account. 2 Daniel said, "In my vision at night I was watching, and suddenly the four winds
of heaven stirred up the great sea. 3 Four huge beasts came up from the sea, each different
from the other. 4 The first was like a lion but had eagle's wings. I continued watching until
its wings were torn off. It was lifted up from the ground, set on its feet like a man, and given
a human mind. 5 Suddenly, another beast appeared, a second one, that looked like a bear. It
was raised up on one side, with three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, 'Get up!
Gorge yourself on flesh.' 6 After this, while I was watching, suddenly another beast appeared.
It was like a leopard with four wings of a bird on its back. It had four heads, and it was given
dominion. 7 After this, while I was watching in the night visions, suddenly a fourth beast
appeared, frightening and dreadful, and incredibly strong, with large iron teeth. It devoured
and crushed, and it trampled with its feet whatever was left. It was different from all the
beasts before it, and it had ten horns. 8 While I was considering the horns, suddenly another
horn, a little one, came up among them, and three of the first horns were uprooted before
it. And suddenly in this horn there were eyes like the eyes of a human and a mouth that was
speaking arrogantly."

GOD'S KINGDOM IS EVERLASTING

DANIEL 7:9-14

9 "As I kept watching, thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His
clothing was white like snow, and the hair of his head like whitest wool. His throne was flaming
fire; its wheels were blazing fire. 10 A river of fire was flowing, coming out from his presence.
Thousands upon thousands served him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him.
The court was convened, and the books were opened. 11 I watched, then, because of the sound
of the arrogant words the horn was speaking. As I continued watching, the beast was killed
and its body destroyed and given over to the burning fire. 12 As for the rest of the beasts, their
dominion was removed, but an extension of life was granted to them for a certain period of
time. 13 I continued watching in the night visions, and suddenly one like a son of man was
coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was escorted before
him. 14 He was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, so that those of every people, nation,
and language should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass
away, and his kingdom is one that will not be destroyed."

MAIN POINT.

Even when worldly kingdoms fall, God's kingdom lasts forever.

THEOLOGY *CONNECTION*

SPECIAL REVELATION

Special revelation refers to God's revealing Himself to humanity through historical events, His Word, and through Jesus Christ. Through special revelation, human beings learn about God's character, His will, His purpose for creation, and His plan of redemption. Special revelation shows us the nature and character of God, and because God has revealed Himself in this way, we can know Him—through a saving relationship with Him in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

DISCUSSION

WORLDLY KINGDOMS ARE TEMPORARY

DANIEL 7:1-8

- **Which beast's description stood out most to you? Why?**
- **How would you describe the world in this text? Do you ever feel like God doesn't have control over our world today?**

- **What do our worldly kingdoms look like? Why is it dangerous to put all of our time and energy into building them?**

GOD'S KINGDOM IS EVERLASTING

DANIEL 7:9-14

- **What is the "Ancient of Days" like? Who is He?**

- **Read Matthew 24:29-31 and Philippians 2:9-11. Who is the "one like a son of man"? What connections do you see to Daniel's vision?**

- **Read verses 15-27. What do you think God wanted the exiles (and us) to know from this vision?**

HOW CAN DANIEL'S VISION ENCOURAGE YOU WHEN YOUR WORLD FEELS CHAOTIC, UNSTEADY, OR WRECKED?

CULTURAL *CONNECTION*

Do you ever wonder why God allows evil rulers to rule? Since God has authority over everything, why doesn't He just prevent evil people from having any power in this world? It's okay to ask this question. Honestly, asking this question shows that you recognize God is good, and what you're wrestling with is mostly the problem of evil. No ruler has authority without God giving it (Rom. 13:1). At times, God has allowed evil rulers to act as judgment against His people for their sin—like the kings we've been reading about in Daniel. We don't always know why God allows evil humans to take power, but we do know that our good God works all things for His glory and for our ultimate good—the good of the gospel (Rom. 8:28). We also know that God holds those evil leaders accountable and judges them for their sins. They may have the temporary opportunity to lead immorally and cruelly, but their kingdoms will fall; they will give an account for their sin.

DAY ONE

1 JOHN 2:15-17

In Daniel 7, Daniel described a vision of four major kingdoms that would rise during and after his time. Although all these kingdoms will be powerful, they ultimately will not endure. One day, the Son of Man will come to destroy these kingdoms and establish His kingdom forever.

The apostle John explored this theme in his first letter. In chapter 2, he urged the church not to love the world or the things in it. He described the things in the world as "the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of one's possessions." These three descriptions can be summed up as anything that would draw us away from loving God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength.

John told us not to love these things for two reasons. First, like the kingdoms in Daniel's day, the things of the world will pass away. The romantic relationships we desire will eventually end. The money we work for will dissolve, our clothes and shoes will wear out and deteriorate, our physical beauty and strength will fade, and our trophies will gather dust. However, those who have called on Jesus for salvation and surrendered to Him will endure forever. Second, we shouldn't love the things of the world because they aren't from God. Our heavenly Father is the giver of all good things (James 1:17). The good things that the world offers are counterfeits, fakes. The acceptance of friends, academic and athletic accolades, followers on social medias, and a new pair of shoes may be appealing, but they are nothing compared to enjoying a relationship with God.

- **WHAT "THINGS IN THIS WORLD" ARE YOU TEMPTED TO LOVE MORE THAN GOD? HOW CAN YOU SURRENDER THEM?**
- **WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE IN YOUR LIFE SO THAT YOU'RE INVESTING IN THE ETERNAL KINGDOM OF GOD?**

PRAY

FATHER, YOUR KINGDOM IS ETERNAL. PLEASE HELP ME TO INVEST MY LIFE IN YOUR KINGDOM AND NOT IN THE DESIRES OF MY FLESH OR IN POSSESSIONS THAT WILL PASS AWAY.

DAY TWO

MATTHEW 6:19-21

In Matthew 6:19-21, Jesus commanded us not to store up earthly treasures that fade away but to focus on heavenly treasures that will last forever. But what exactly are these heavenly treasures? In the context of this passage, Jesus had just spoken about praying, giving, and fasting. Spiritual disciplines like these, along with Scripture reading, are heavenly treasures that will not fade away. During our earthly lives, we can invest in eternity in two major ways: the Word of God and people's souls. Paul taught that godliness is profitable for all things because it holds a reward for this world *and* the world to come (1 Tim. 4:6-7). By practicing godly habits like Bible reading, Scripture memory and meditation, prayer, and evangelism, we allow the Spirit to work in our lives to shape us more into Christ's image. As a student, this looks like daily spending time reading God's Word, meeting with friends before school to pray, getting involved in a discipleship group at your church, and being intentional about having gospel conversations with your friends at school. We will reap an eternal reward for discipling others. The people we invest in will then make disciples too, growing God's kingdom!

Jesus said that where our treasure is, our heart will be also. Our treasure can be measured by how we use our free time and what we spend our money on. If we love Jesus above all else, then what we do on the weekends and how we use our allowance or earnings from work will show it. So, do you spend your free time more in God's Word or on social media? Do you invest your money more in clothes or in Christ and His church? Where you invest your time and money is where your heart will be also.

- **WHAT ARE THE IDOLS IN YOUR HEART PREVENTING YOU FROM TREASURING JESUS?**
- **ASSESS YOUR FREE TIME ON THE WEEKENDS. WHAT ARE YOU INVESTING YOUR TIME IN? WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE?**

PRAY

FATHER, PLEASE FORGIVE ME FOR STORING UP EARTHLY TREASURES. HELP ME TO INVEST MY LIFE IN YOUR WORD AND THE LIVES OF OTHERS SO THAT I CAN GLORIFY YOUR NAME AND REAP AN ETERNAL REWARD THAT WILL NEVER PASS AWAY.

DAY THREE

PSALM 103:15-22

The closing chapters of Daniel offer visions of the future. These visions can be difficult to comprehend and even frightening to read. However, one theme throughout these chapters is the solid foundation of God's kingdom enduring forever.

In Psalm 103, the psalmist described the eternal nature of God's kingdom (v. 19). God has established His throne in the heavens, and His kingdom rules over all. One reason God's kingdom will never end is that God Himself is eternal. God has no beginning and no end; He has always existed. In contrast to God, who is infinite and uncreated, we are finite, created beings. The psalmist compared us to the grass that is here today and gone tomorrow. Our lives are like a vapor or a mist in the timeline of eternity. The kingdoms of this world will eventually fall because they are ruled by finite—limited—people who will ultimately die.

This is why God reminded Daniel of His eternal nature in chapters 7–12. God conveyed that as powerful as these kingdoms were, they would fall because their rulers were finite, created beings. However, Yahweh's kingdom is eternal and will never end. The beautiful truth about God's eternal nature is that His attributes will persist forever. Verse 17 proclaims that God's faithful love will endure for eternity for those who fear Him. God's love for His people will remain steadfast and unending. What comfort this brings to all those who take refuge in Him! We should respond in praise like the psalmist in verses 20-22, rejoicing that His kingdom will endure forever, and His faithful love towards us will never run out!

- **HOW DOES GOD'S ETERNAL NATURE COMFORT YOU WHEN YOU RECEIVE BAD NEWS OR WHEN LIFE DOESN'T MAKE SENSE?**
- **OUR SOCIETY PROMOTES THE IDEA OF MAKING HUMANITY LIMITLESS. WHY IS IT ACTUALLY GOOD THAT GOD MADE US FINITE AND DEPENDENT WITH LIMITATIONS?**

PRAY

LORD, I PRAISE YOU. YOUR FAITHFUL LOVE IS FROM ETERNITY TO ETERNITY. PLEASE HELP ME BY YOUR SPIRIT TO FEAR YOU AND WALK IN YOUR WAYS. I'M HONORED TO SERVE YOU HERE.

DAY FOUR

REVELATION 19:11-16

What is your view of Jesus? Do you just see Him as the baby in the manger at Christmas or as a friend you can turn to when you're in trouble? Or do you recognize Him as the holy One, the King of kings, and Lord of lords? We often struggle to worship, adore, and walk in obedience to Christ because we forget His majesty and glory.

Revelation 19:11-16 displays the full glory of the Son of God. John saw a vision of Jesus coming out of heaven on a white horse, symbolizing His victory. His name is Faithful and True because He fulfilled every promise of God the Father (2 Cor. 1:20). His eyes were like flames of fire, accenting His perfect purity and power. Many crowns were on His head, communicating that He alone is the one true King. Jesus's robe was dipped in blood, indicating that He will slay all His enemies through the power of His Word, a sharp sword. He controls all the angel armies of heaven and will pour out His just and holy wrath against all evil and wickedness until all things are placed under His feet.

This is our King, the Lion of the tribe of Judah. The kings of this world are nothing compared to Jesus. Therefore, we must pledge our allegiance not to worldly kings, but to King Jesus, the ruler of heaven and earth. We will not fear earthly kings, kingdoms, or people when we fear and respect the Lord. We will willingly give up our comforts, possessions, and even our lives for Jesus when we have a clear understanding of His glory and majesty. This is what empowered Daniel to live faithfully, and we must do the same.

- **WHAT FALSE PICTURES OF JESUS INFLUENCE US TO VIEW HIM IN A LOWER POSITION THAN HE IS?**
- **HOW DOES HAVING A WRONG VIEW OF JESUS AFFECT OUR OBEDIENCE TO HIM?**

PRAY

LORD JESUS, YOU ARE THE KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. PLEASE FORGIVE ME FOR FORGETTING HOW GLORIOUS YOU ARE. HELP ME TO SEE YOUR MAJESTY DAILY SO I CAN OBEY YOUR COMMANDS.

DAY FIVE

PSALM 90:1-4

In Daniel's vision of the Son of Man in chapter 7, he described God as the Ancient of Days, which conveys God's eternal nature. The psalmist echoed this theme, stating that God has been God from eternity past and will continue to be God in eternity future. When we hear the word eternity, we often think of it only in terms of the future. However, God is the Ancient of Days, indicating that His existence extends *back*—before time began! Unlike all created things, God has no origin or starting point. He exists outside of space and time as we understand it. God has no past or future; instead, He perceives everything all at once. God does not gain knowledge; He isn't surprised by anything; He knows all things simultaneously. These truths are almost impossible for our human minds to comprehend!

God's eternity should comfort us when the kingdoms of this world appear to be winning. When laws promote unbiblical views of marriage, human life, and civil rights, we can trust that these issues are not outside God's control; He isn't surprised by anything. Before time began, the Ancient of Days planned to redeem humanity from their sin through the Son of Man, Jesus Christ. We've studied how God used Cyrus to bring about His judgment and restoration of Israel in rebuilding the temple (2 Chron. 36:22-23); surely He can also use all present-day rulers and leaders for His purposes. We can trust Him completely because He holds all things together (Col. 1:17). God knows your past, and He knows your future. Therefore, when anxiety attacks you, trust in your omniscient God, who knows all things, and give Him your worries, for He cares for you and will strengthen you (1 Pet. 5:6-10).

- **HOW DOES KNOWING THAT GOD HAS ALWAYS EXISTED COMFORT YOU IN AREAS OF YOUR LIFE THAT CAUSE ANXIETY?**
- **WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE TO GIVE YOUR ANXIETIES TO THE LORD DAILY? HOW SHOULD KNOWING YOUR ETERNITY IS SECURE AFFECT YOUR LIFE NOW?**

PRAY

LORD, YOU KNOW MY PAST AND FUTURE. YOU HAVE ALWAYS EXISTED AND ALWAYS WILL. HELP ME TO BE IN AWE OF YOU AND TO GIVE MY WORRIES TO YOU, KNOWING YOU ARE SOVEREIGN OVER MY LIFE.