

(This is written to give you good things to enjoy, because look again at what Paul told Timothy (1 Tim 6:17-18)! I think he was thinking of us at the time: **17 Instruct those who are rich in the present age not to be conceited and not to put their hope in the uncertainty of wealth, but in God, WHO RICHLY PROVIDES ALL THINGS TO ENJOY. 18 Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, and to be generous and ready to share...**) The following ice breaker is just a starter for your group. The message comes after the second bar. Please enjoy!

CROWD BREAKER: What is the best news you heard this week? —The scribe

Note: Be good to one another. Be sensitive and kind. Let God heal our hearts...and guide our discussions. **PLEASE PRE-READ THESE NOTES AND CHOOSE THE DIRECTION THAT IS APPROPRIATE FOR YOUR GROUP. The purpose is to unite, not divide; to fearlessly proclaim the freedom the gospel brings. Any part of these notes might be appropriate as a crowd breaker for your own group. The goal is to create memories from Sunday that will serve for a long time. BE COGNIZANT OF YOUR GROUP'S TIME AND BE SENSITIVE! Some groups would like to dwell on a single idea. Let the Spirit be your guide. Never feel obligated to complete this study. This study is also a great devotion, taken slowly through the week.**

Note: I have highlighted suggested discussion questions raised by Pastor Mark's message from this Sunday. Let's allow the Holy Spirit to guide all our discussions, using the highlights as trail blazes. **The purpose is to minister to one another.**

Daniel's Prayer for His People

1In the first year of Darius son of Xerxes, a Mede by descent, who was made ruler over the kingdom of the Chaldeans — **2**in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood from the sacred books, according to the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years. (**Look up Jeremiah 29:9-11 ...9For they are falsely prophesying to you in My name; I have not sent them, declares the LORD."** **10****For this is what the LORD says: "When Babylon's seventy years are complete, I will attend to you and confirm My promise to restore you to this place. 11**For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, to give you a future and a hope....**This was written seventy years before Daniel wrote. What do you notice? What encouragement does Daniel find in Jeremiah's prophecy?** **3**So I turned my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and petition, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes. (**Explain why Daniel prays and fasts. If God promised an end to the trouble, why does Daniel feel he has to pray? Now read his prayer carefully.**)

4And I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed, "O, Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant of loving devotion to those who love Him and keep His

commandments, **5**we have sinned and done wrong. We have acted wickedly and rebelled. We have turned away from Your commandments and ordinances. **6**We have not listened to Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings, leaders, and fathers, and to all the people of the land. ***What elements do you see in this section? Whose sin is he confessing? Did Daniel commit these transgressions, ever? Read the next section:***

7To You, O Lord, belongs righteousness, but this day we are covered with shame—the men of Judah, the people of Jerusalem, and all Israel near and far, in all the countries to which You have driven us because of our unfaithfulness to You. **8**O LORD, we are covered with shame—our kings, our leaders, and our fathers—because we have sinned against You.

9To the Lord our God belong compassion and forgiveness, even though we have rebelled against Him **10**and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God to walk in His laws, which He set before us through His servants the prophets. ***What two elements does Daniel repeatedly refer to? Whose goodness? Whose transgressions?***

11All Israel has transgressed Your law and turned away, refusing to obey Your voice; so the oath and the curse written in the Law of Moses the servant of God has been poured out on us, because we have sinned against You. **12**You have carried out the words spoken against us and against our rulers by bringing upon us a great disaster. For under all of heaven, nothing has ever been done like what has been done to Jerusalem. ***Were we forewarned? Is there any evil in God's judgment? Did we get what we deserved as He foretold?***

13Just as it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come upon us, yet we have not sought the favor of the LORD our God by turning from our iniquities and giving attention to Your truth. **14**Therefore the LORD has kept the calamity in store and brought it upon us. For the LORD our God is righteous in all He does; yet we have not obeyed His voice. ***What is the confession? What is the praise?***

15Now, O Lord our God, who brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and who made for Yourself a name renowned to this day, we have sinned; we have acted wickedly. **16**O Lord, in keeping with all Your righteous acts, I pray that Your anger and wrath may turn away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; for because of our sins and the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people are a reproach to all around us. ***What element has Daniel added here? How many petitions does he make here?***

17So now, our God, hear the prayers and petitions of Your servant. For Your sake, O Lord, cause Your face to shine upon Your desolate sanctuary. **18**Incline Your ear, O my God, and hear; open Your eyes and see the desolation of the city that bears Your name. For we are not presenting our petitions before You because of our righteous acts, but because of Your great compassion. ***How many petitions does he make here? List them?***

19O Lord, listen! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, hear and act! For Your sake, O my God, do not delay, because Your city and Your people bear Your name.” ***What reminder does Daniel extend to God? If God promised He would move in seventy years, why does Daniel have to pray this prayer? Can you explain how this prayer is one of the best examples of “the prayer of faith?” What is his prayer based on?***

20While I was speaking, praying, confessing my sin and that of my people Israel, and presenting my petition before the LORD my God concerning His holy mountain— **21**while

I was still praying, Gabriel, the man I had seen in the earlier vision, came to me in swift flight about the time of the evening sacrifice. **(What does Gabriel "in swift flight" look like?)** ²²He instructed me and spoke with me, saying: "O Daniel, I have come now to give you insight and understanding. ²³At the beginning of your petitions, an answer went out, and I have come to tell you, for you are highly precious. So consider the message and understand the vision: **What is God's response? What is the purpose of Gabriel's vision? How quickly did God respond to Daniel's petition? (Remember this for a later chapter!!!)** ²⁴Seventy weeks (or "sevens"—Pastor Mark's footnote) are decreed for your people and your holy city to stop their transgression, to put an end to sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy Place. **Look closely at what Gabriel says. What does this sound like? Has any of this taken place yet? Have we seen an "end to transgression"? Is prophecy and vision "sealed up"? If, as it is written, "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rev. 19:10), does prophecy ever cease in this age?**

²⁵Know and understand this: From the issuance of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, until the Messiah, the Prince, there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks. It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of distress. **What is Gabriel doing? What do we know of times and seasons? How specific does he get? Were there times of distress?** (Scribe's note: "Messiah" is Hebrew for the Greek word "Christ." They are synonymous..."Christ the Prince" is foretold clearly here. The 62 weeks, according to some prominent mathematician/scholars, bring us to Jesus' triumphal entry, where Jesus was welcomed as Prince! **Why does it matter that immediately after, He was "cut off"?**)

²⁶Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and will have nothing. **What does this tell you? How was Messiah "cut off?" Notice too...Daniel knew the times by Jeremiah's prophecy. How significant is it to see that Caiaphas and the leaders in Jesus' day did not know? The had Daniel's prediction to the day.**

Then the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. **When did we hear about this "prince"? (Look at the last chapter's notes.) What happens to this "prince"?** (Remember: He is "cut off, but not with human hands!") The end will come like a flood, and until the end there will be war; desolations have been decreed.

(Check out Matthew 24: 6 You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. These things must happen, but the end is still to come. ⁷Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places....**How much of Daniel is in what Jesus foretold?**

²⁷And he will confirm a covenant with many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of the temple will come the abomination that causes desolation, until the decreed destruction is poured out upon him." **What do we know of this man?**

Look up Mark 13: 13 You will be hated by everyone because of My name, but the one who perseveres to the end will be saved.

14 So when you see the abomination of desolation standing where it should not be (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. **15** Let no one on the housetop go back inside to retrieve anything from his house...

Look up Revelation 13: **5** The beast was given a mouth to speak arrogant and blasphemous words, and authority to act for 42 months. **6** And the beast opened its mouth to speak blasphemies against God and to slander His name and His tabernacle—those who dwell in heaven.

7 Then the beast was permitted to wage war against the saints and to conquer them, and it was given authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation. **8** And all who dwell on the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written from the foundation of the world in the Book of Life belonging to the Lamb who was slain.

9 He who has an ear, let him hear: **How closely does this parallel what Daniel foresaw? Why is the beast “permitted to wage war against the saints”? What does it mean “to conquer them”? How do the saints “endure to the end”? What will it take to endure? How does life group help? What is important to know here? What is “not so much”?**

Look up 1 Cor. 3:16. **16** Do you not know that you yourselves are God’s temple, and that God’s Spirit dwells in you? **How important is this verse to this discussion. What is the temple that matters, that is being built today? What part do you play in this temple? How important does that make you to be?**

Look again at what Paul says: **10** By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one must be careful how he builds. **11** For no one can lay a foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. **12** If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, or straw, **13** his workmanship will be evident, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will prove the quality of each man’s work. **14** If what he has built survives, he will receive a reward. **15** If it is burned up, he will suffer loss. He himself will be saved, but only as if through the flames.

Discuss how the temple is built. How do you see your own testimony in these verses?

Mark asks, “If we are the temple, what abominations have we allowed to be built into us?” Answer him. If we are the temple, how does the “abomination of desolation” come in to destroy? How do we bring glory to God the Father?

Follow Mark’s reasoning: If Jesus was the temple (“Destroy this temple and I will raise it up in three days), and we are the temple...What abominations have we allowed in? How much of the world system have we adopted, without seeing the corruption? Our works will be tested by the fire: How are you doing? How is “my life bringing glory to God the father?” Mark says, “I want us to think about ourselves as the temple. If we are the temple, how well are we making it comfortable for the Holy Spirit to reside?” Are we going to be able to stand when society comes against us to conform to their image? He says, “The only thing we are to conform to is the image of Jesus Christ.” How are you doing?

How important is it to take time to pray for one another? Do it now.

What is your biggest takeaway from this message? What is your next step? —the scribe

Scribe's footnotes: Where else in the Bible do we see Gabriel? What do you associate the angel Gabriel with? How significant is that?

Corrie Ten Boom, Dutch survivor of the holocaust, and the subject of the book and movie *The Hiding Place*, was asked once, "Are you a "pre-millennialist" (Jesus comes before the Millennium), post-millennialist (He comes after the Millennium) or amillennialist? (There is no Millennial reign)?" Her response was classic: She said, "If you want to know my opinion of Jesus' coming, I'd call this 'a-pre-post-erous' question. You can say that I am 'Pro-millennialist.' I'm all for it. If you want to put me into a box, you can say I'm 'Pan-millennialist. It will all pan out in the end."