

appetites for Lesson 2.

Talk about the exciting things they're going to be discovering as they continue to study the book of Daniel. Let them know that the most exciting adventure of their lives awaits them as they open up these tremendous books of Daniel and Revelation.

Read Question 8 and invite the students to mark a response in the blank

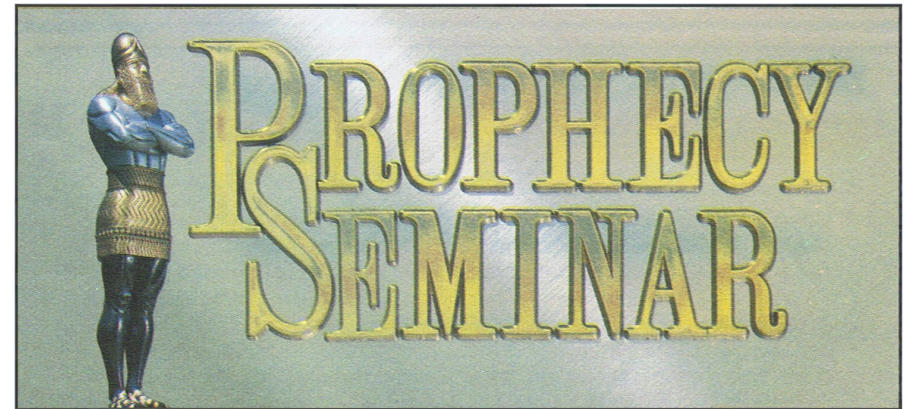
Close with prayer. Remind them to take their materials home and be sure to be back the next evening the Prophecy Seminar is held.

DS-001

Notes, Questions & Prayer Requests

Bible texts in this lesson are primarily quoted from New King James Version copyright Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Copyright 1989 and 1994 by SEMINARS UNLIMITED. Christian ethics dictate that this material not be copied without written permission.



INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF DANIEL

Welcome to the Prophecy Seminar! You have been selected to teach the Prophecy Seminar with special emphasis on the book of Daniel. An exciting adventure awaits you as you lead people to the full message of truth through this special study of the prophecies of the Bible. Whether you are a lay person or a pastor, you will find this series of 31 lessons to be an exciting adventure in Bible study. If you have previously led a Revelation Seminar, you will find that many of the same instructions will apply to this seminar as to the Revelation Seminar.

While the Revelation Seminar centers in the book of Revelation, the Prophecy Seminar centers in the book of Daniel. It will be a chapter by chapter study of the book of Daniel. However, in order to clarify many of Daniel's prophecies it will be necessary to also study many chapters in the book of Revelation as well. Since it is impossible to understand Daniel without Revelation, you will need to explain to your students that both books will be studied in detail during the Prophecy Seminar. That is why we have chosen the title "Prophecy Seminar" rather than "Daniel Seminar." While the structure of the Seminar is built around the book of Daniel, many of the lessons will also center in the book of Revelation.

We have chosen the chapter-by-chapter approach rather than the topical approach to the book of Daniel. The book of Daniel lends itself nicely to a systematic presentation of the full message. Every major truth as taught by the Seventh-day Adventist Church has its roots in the book of Daniel. It is the book of Daniel that gave birth to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It is the books of Daniel and Revelation that will give this Church its final grand impetus as it finishes the work of God.

This will be an exciting adventure not only for your students, but also for you as you delve deeper into these tremendous books of the Bible.

There are 31 lessons in the series. Since the order of subjects follows the sequence of the book of Daniel itself, you will find you will get the best results from the seminar when you follow the prescribed order of subjects. This seminar should take nine weeks to complete if the seminar meets three times each week. It is recommended that the seminar meet on alternate nights, such as Monday, Wednesday and Friday; or Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday. It is best not to meet on consecutive nights, since the student will need time to prepare his lesson before the seminar.

The lessons of this seminar are designed for the student first to do at home so that he can bring his completed lesson to the seminar, where the teacher will discuss the lesson. The lessons are also designed to include a Sabbath Seminar that will start the week after the Sabbath is presented, during which the teacher will inform the students that an additional lesson will be taught each week on Saturday morning at 9:30, or whenever Sabbath School is held. The lesson taught for the Sabbath Seminar should be the next in the regular sequence of lessons. In other words, rather than using additional lessons for the Sabbath Seminar, the teacher will use the regular lessons in their normal sequence. Thus after the Sabbath is presented the Seminar will meet four times a week. This arrangement will enable you to finish the Seminar in around nine weeks.

Since the first lesson in the Prophecy Seminar is an introductory lesson, it has been designed so that it can be taught the first night of the meeting. It is a short lesson without many texts to look up so that actual study of prophecy occurs the very first night of the series. Thus the first night the people will be given Lessons 1 and 2 and instructed to take

prophets day, but focusing in the time of the end. Thus it is rooted in history and continually expands as history develops, but focuses on the time of the end.

Make it clear to your students that in the Prophecy Seminar we have espoused the historicist approach to prophecy.

Make it clear to them that this is the most consistent interpretation of prophecy by the Christian church down through the ages.

This was the method of interpretation espoused by the Reformation leaders, by the earliest Christian church, and by the Jewish church previous to the coming of Christ. Only in the last few years have the Preterist and Futurist views of interpreting prophecy come into being.

While you will not say this publicly in this lesson, for your information the Preterist and Futurist views originated during the Catholic counter reformation, in which the Catholic Church tried to divert the attention of the prophecies from the Roman Church to some other power; consequently they devised two interpretations, one that placed all the prophecies in the past, which took the blame off the church, and the other that put them in the future, and likewise took the blame off the church.

You should understand that the rapture theology is basically a futurist approach to prophecy, and therefore by clearly teaching the historicist view of interpretation in the very first lesson, you are basically undermining the structure of rapturism.

But please be certain that you do not even mention the rapture at this point. Merely talk about the method of interpretation, and the one that is most consistent with the evidence in the book of Daniel and the most consistent way of interpreting Daniel by most Christians throughout the ages.

In Lesson 2 we are going to look at the basic theme of the book of Daniel. It is imperative that we understand the basic message of the book before we can go into a detailed explanation of the book. Be sure to whet their

undermining rapture theology.

Our basic method of interpretation is that of “outline prophecy.” Outline prophecy presents world events from the prophet's day to the second coming of Christ. Each succeeding prophecy in Daniel repeats and expands those events, showing that each prophecy is building on the previous one.

The prophecies are therefore rooted in history, yet focusing on the time of the end. Please give strong emphasis to this section of the lesson.

Make certain that you are not crowded on your time so that you have to skim through this section quickly, since this is probably the most important section of Lesson 1.

There are three basic interpretations of prophecy:

- (1) The **Preterist** view recognizes that most of the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation have already found their fulfilment in the past. In fact, proponents of this view many times suggest that the prophecies were actually written after the event. The prophecies were merely history written as if it was yet to happen but it had already happened. Proponents of this theory usually date the book of Daniel in the second century B.C. since many of the prophecies had already been fulfilled by then.
- (2) The **Futurist** view places all prophecy basically in the future. Therefore it is not rooted and grounded in history. Those who advocate this view usually interpret prophecy on the basis of the latest newspaper account. Any event that takes place in the world that looks similar to the Bible prophecy, they feel is a fulfilment of the prophecy. This becomes very speculative prophetic interpretation.
- (3) The **Historist** view of interpreting prophecy has been the traditional method of interpretation used by the Christian church from earliest times, and even used by the Jews previous to the coming of Christ.

This method of interpretation sees prophecy as beginning in the

Lesson 2 home and prepare it for the next time the seminar meets.

The basic theme of the book of Daniel is the Great Controversy between Christ and Satan. Make certain that you build this concept through every lesson in the book of Daniel. You will discover that this basic theme has been interwoven throughout this seminar. The Prophecy Seminar emphasizes two areas of conflict in Daniel: worship and obedience to the law of God. In last-day events these two areas unite together to create conflict for the people of God over how they worship God, as the beast attempts to get people to worship contrary to the commandments of God.

Critical to your success in conducting this Prophecy Seminar will be your ability to clearly enunciate this basic theme found in the book of Daniel. Remember that yours is a tremendous opportunity and privilege as you seek to lead men and women into a full knowledge of God's saving message for these last days. It is absolutely essential for your success as you conduct this seminar to spend much time in prayer, asking God to guide you as you prepare your lesson, to guide the students as they prepare their lessons, then to guide the discussion as you teach the lesson.

May God bless you as you seek to reach others with God's saving message through this fascinating adventure in the study of prophecy as found in the book of Daniel.

LESSON ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF DANIEL

The first night of your seminar is a very critical and important evening. People come to the seminar excited and expecting to learn much. They also may be sceptical when they come. Therefore it is very important during that first night to help the people relax and feel comfortable about the presentations that are going to be made.

The first 15-20 minutes of your first evening should be devoted to introduction. Normally your seminar should last between 60-75 minutes. Most evenings you will be nearer 60 minutes, and some of the larger subjects may need to expand to 75 minutes. However, never should you go beyond an hour and a quarter, no matter how excited the people may be. Resist the temptation to go longer or you may wear your people out and they will not come back. Start on time and always finish on time. Below is a suggested order of presentation for the first evening. Remember, the first 15-20 minutes are for this introductory material, after which you will present Lesson 1.

1. Welcome the participants to the Prophecy Seminar.
2. Introduce yourself. State clearly that you are Pastor _____ of the local Seventh-day Adventist Church. If you're a lay person, introduce yourself as a member of the local Seventh-day Adventist Church, which is sponsoring the Prophecy Seminar. Be up front from the very beginning. Do not hide your identity or connection with the Church. You may wish to add that while the Prophecy Seminar is sponsored by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, it is open to people of all faiths and that probably here tonight many of you have come from different religious faiths.
3. Ground rules. (a) Since we have come from different religious persuasions there may be times when we might not see things in the same light. That is perfectly all right in the seminar. It is all right to disagree, but not to be disagreeable. We can love and

Note on Question 6:

The people attending your seminar need to clearly see the value of studying the stories of the book of Daniel. Most of them have looked at the stories as nice bedtime stories to tell their children, but have never seen the impact these stories make on the prophecies.

The point that needs strong emphasis here is that the stories illustrate the prophecies, and since the whole book is focusing on the time of the end, the conflicts that Daniel and his friends went through in the time of Nebuchadnezzar are illustrative of the conflict that God's people will go through in the time of the end. Either read the note under Question 6, or go over the material in your own words with the student, but make sure he catches the connection between the historical and the prophetic sections of the book.

This is also the time when you can clearly enunciate the methodology that you will be using in your study of Daniel, that is, you will explain to them the chapter-by-chapter approach and the excursions into Revelation.

How To Interpret Daniel:

One of the major decisions that your students will have to make will be over the question of the secret rapture. It is the major hurdle that most people have in accepting the Seventh-day Adventist message today. These lessons have not been designed to hit the rapture head-on until much later in the series.

However, foundations are laid in each lesson that undermine the rapture theory. It begins right here in this section of Lesson 1. The rapturist is primarily a futurist who places all the interpretation of Daniel and Revelation basically in the future. Thus it is very important that at the very beginning your students learn the correct method of interpretation.

You will not mention the rapture at this point in the lesson, but for your information you need to understand that what you are saying here is

conducting the Prophecy Seminar just to give them a head knowledge of these books, but to lead them into a living relationship with Jesus Christ.

Note on Question 3:

Several scholars have questioned the authenticity of Daniel being the author of the book. They have also questioned whether Daniel was written in the sixth century B.C. as the book of Daniel claims. Many scholars date the book of Daniel in the second century B.C. The reason for doing so was that the events predicted in Daniel are so accurately fulfilled, they could only have been written after the event. In other words, it is an attempt to deny predictive prophecy.

However, much recent archaeological evidence has substantiated the fact that the book of Daniel was indeed written in the sixth century B.C. rather than in the second century. If we believe in predictive prophecy, then we have no problem with dating Daniel in the sixth century.

However, most of the problems associated with the book of Daniel have been resolved today by modern archaeological excavations that have validated that the book of Daniel has to have been written by a person living in the times of Nebuchadnezzar.

In fact, many of the things revealed in the book of Daniel were lost sight of and not known in the second century B.C. The fact that the author or Daniel knew these things further verifies that the book of Daniel was written in the sixth century B.C. It would be well for you to read the Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary on the date of the book of Daniel, so that you are familiar with this area in case one of your students should question you.

Note on Question 5:

This question needs good emphasis. The student needs to see that the focal point of the entire book, both stories and prophecies, is the time of the end. Since we today are living in the time of the end, the focal point of the book of Daniel thus becomes our day.

respect each other even though we don't fully agree with each other. (b) All questions should be directed to the teacher. If you have a question at any time, please raise your hand and wait until the teacher recognizes you. If your question is one that will be studied in a later lesson, we will ask you to hold the question until that time. If it is a question that cannot be answered very quickly, the teacher might recommend that those who are interested in the answer to that question stay after class and we could discuss it at that time. If the student asks you a question that you do not know the answer to, let them know that you would be happy to research it and bring them back an answer.

4. Have them fill out the survey sheet.
5. Go over the materials that they have received: the Bible, the lessons—briefly explain their content and how they are to be used, the pen, the ruler, and the binder. Explain that these materials are theirs to take home and to keep at the conclusion of the seminar if they complete the series. If for some reason they are unable to complete the seminar, they should return their materials so they can be made available to others.
6. Show them the diploma they will receive upon completion of the Prophecy Seminar.
7. Explain the quiz envelope. Each evening there will be a quiz at the beginning of each night's program. The quiz will ask five questions regarding the previous night's seminar. This will give you a chance to review the previous lesson. It is recommended that the quiz be done at the beginning rather than at the end so that the student leaves thinking about the decision that he was asked to make at the end rather than the quiz questions. Since the quiz reviews the previous night's lesson, there will be no quiz the first night, but the quiz will begin with the second evening.
8. Also explain that the quiz envelope is used for offerings. While everyone is free to come whether they can give or not, it does cost to put on the Prophecy Seminar and if they care to share in the

expenses of the seminar, they can do so by placing an offering each night, or any night they wish, in the envelope and just leave it on the table.

After this brief introduction you are ready to begin the study of Lesson 1. Have the students take out Lesson 1 and begin going through it with them. While Lesson 1 is primarily introductory, you as teacher are laying a foundation that will determine your success or failure in the Prophecy Seminar. Many of the basic concepts as taught in the book of Daniel, as well as the way the book of Daniel is interpreted, will be covered in this introductory lesson.

You will need to make clear to your students that while the seminar focuses on the book of Daniel, we will also look very carefully at the book of Revelation, that Daniel and Revelation are companion books. One cannot be understood without the other. You should make it clear that Lesson 1 will give a basic introduction to the book of Daniel, Lesson 2 will cover the basic theme in the book of Daniel, and Lesson 8 will begin with Chapter 1 and move chronologically through the book. However, there will be times when the lessons will move to the book of Revelation in order to better understand some of what is happening in the book of Daniel. This basic method of study should be made very clear to the students on opening night.

Read the first paragraph of the lesson. Be excited so your students will be excited about what they're going to learn from the Prophecy Seminar. It is imperative that you be excited about your study, or you will never get your students to be excited about the study that they are entering.

Read through the five points on what the Prophecy Seminar will do for you. Give particular emphasis to Items 3, 4 and 5. Your students need to see very clearly that this seminar is not designed to merely give them a knowledge of the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation, but is to help them develop a better relationship with Jesus Christ and find real meaning to their life. Give strong emphasis to the fact that the books of Daniel and Revelation can be understood. Many of your students have heard preachers say that Daniel and Revelation cannot be understood, and many of them are sceptical about the possibility of understanding

Daniel and Revelation. Thus you need to assure them that before the seminar is over they will clearly understand these books and their meaning for today.

Three Basic Premises

Make sure that you read and elaborate on these three basic premises. The people you are working with need to know your basic premise and method of interpretation. They need to hear you saying again and again that you interpret Daniel and Revelation by what the Bible says, that you let the Bible explain itself. We don't go by human teachings, we don't listen to preachers, we don't look at current events to find how to interpret the Scriptures—we let the Bible explain the Bible.

Point number two is also extremely important to emphasize. Many of the people who come to the seminar have had misconceptions about Seventh-day Adventists. Some of them think Adventists do not even believe in Jesus Christ; therefore, it is of utmost necessity that you make clear to these people that are coming to your seminar your purpose to uplift Jesus Christ. Talk of Jesus; let the folk know that you love Jesus, that you have a personal relationship with Him and that you want them to have that same personal relationship with Jesus.

Point number three is also vitally important. Share with them that our purpose in studying last-day events is not to just have a detailed understanding of the last days, but to also be prepared for the last days. Let them know that you're more concerned about their preparation for the day of the Lord than you are with the exact order of events that may be taking place.

These three points will help you establish a spiritual overtone to your seminar from the very beginning. Many people come to the seminar expecting to get only a theoretical knowledge of the books of Daniel and Revelation like they would from any other class they might attend. Right at the very beginning you must be laying the foundation that they need to make spiritual decisions over the book of Daniel. We are not