

Daniel 11 is both amazing, startling, supernatural and challenging. A good commentary helps as it unveils the prophecies that were written long before they happened.

For us in our group time, you will need choose what all you want to do together. Here are a few options:

- 1) If your people love to dig into the details, you may want to list out the specific prophecies that are amazing.
- 2) If your people love to discuss the applications and implications, you may want to use Pastor Doug's notes as a jumping off place
- 3) If your people only want to read the chapter, you may want to go from reading to answering the first question below and then go to the "Discuss Together" questions.

Remember, we are aiming to equipping people to make disciples. This means that we will be sharing our faith, help people to learn more of God/Jesus/the Spirit, and encourage people to follow Him in love. The big picture of this chapter was that God knows the future, is sovereign over all things, and has a Master Plan for those who trust in Him.

PROPHECY OR HISTORY?

This week's chapter, written in apocalyptic genre, seems a bit 'hidden' at first reading. Yet, as you line up the descriptions with future history, it is very accurate concerning what was to come for the Jewish people and Jerusalem. In fact, it is so accurate, that some have concluded that it had to have been written hundreds of years after Daniel's lifetime. But it wasn't.

This amazing accuracy of prophecy begs the questions that we can discuss:

- Does God know the future that accurately?
- If so, why did He reveal some things to Daniel but not all things to us?
- Does God know and yet allow the evil we see?

Unlike some of the introductory questions, these take us into theology of God, how God is working in our lives, and a discussion of why God allows some things.

LET'S LEARN FROM GOD'S WORD

If you have walked with us through the previous chapters, you know that God supernaturally preserved and prepared God's people, even though they were in exile in Babylon (and Medo-Persia). In this chapter, an angel is again revealing to Daniel some specific movements in the future that would affect Daniel's people (long after he has passed).

Read through Daniel 11, knowing that each of the statements made has a future fulfillment (now history for us). The following questions may help you understand and digest what is written.

In a very general way, what happens in this chapter?

Evil people attempt to rule over other people, war after war occurs, people are hopelessly chasing and worshiping false gods, and the Jewish people are in the middle. Because of that, many Jewish people are destroyed, betrayed, and orphaned. Some Jewish people welcome the evil king, some resist and fight against the evil king, and many are killed. Eventually, the resisters win for a short time until the Romans come in to rule them.

How are the Jewish people involved or affected in these times of kings and armies?

As above, people are forced to choose:

- To welcome the Syrian and other conquering rulers and worship their false gods
- To resist the evil rulers and trust in God
- To be willing to suffer and die in this life or face judgment in the next life

Since this message was for Daniel and his people, what would they find hopeful? (Be sure to see 12:1-4 also)

Chapter 12 reveals that there will be a resurrection of all the dead, some to life if they are in the "book." This would be very hope filled.

Chapter 11 would be discouraging for those who here of the hundreds of years of wars and suffering ahead.

DISCUSS TOGETHER

This chapter speaks repeatedly of war, violence, and suffering. What have you learned in the book of Daniel about how we should live in dark times?

Three themes come to mind:

- 1) God is sovereign and all-knowing. He will bring about good in the end of all things
- 2) God knows, listens, and cares. As we pray, God encourages, God protects, God answers prayers
- 3) God is more powerful than the darkness, the enemies, and the false gods. We can trust in Him.

What stands out to you from chapter 11? How is this significant to us?

I am struck by the very specific and accurate prophecies. These verify the Scriptures, comfort me knowing that God will one day end the suffering and bring peace and joy, and they remind me that many have trusted in God through dark times.

Verse 36 sounds like the conclusion of Judges 21:25: "And the king shall do as he wills." How did this "king" affect God's people? What, perhaps, does God want us to learn from a chapter like this?

This king led people into following false gods, debauchery, violence, division, and heresy. In addition, he murdered countless believers in God.

Though there is darkness, we must remain in (abide in) Jesus throughout the violence and persecution, for God has a Master Plan that far exceeds the troubles of this life.

The prophecies of this chapter are amazingly accurate. What does this mean to us today?

God has a Master Plan, He is trustworthy, He will bring His people to Himself.

His Word is accurate and testifies to the truth of God.

APPLY IT THIS WEEK

God preserved the Bible "to transform us and be the authority in our lives." The chapter we just studied reveals that God knows the future and is sovereign over it. It reveals that the Word of God is 100% accurate and should be trusted. This week, read again the words of the Apostle Paul in 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the person of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work." God wants you to fully know Him and allow Him to shape you to become like Jesus. Have you prioritized your days to listen to God in His Word? If so, He will "equip" you for "good works" and "train" you in "righteousness" to be like Jesus.

PLEASE PRAY

- So many of our Church family are suffering throughout the world. Please pray for children and adults, especially those who have lost loved ones due to martyrdom.
- Please ask God for whom you could invite to our Resurrection celebration services (7, 9, 11 am)
- Please pray that the Holy Spirit works through our church family, for our Resurrection celebration teams, and for Pastor Doug as we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus.

May His grace and truth encourage your hearts,
Steve