



Don't Worry, God's Got This!

RECAP

This week's focus: Bible prophecy teaches you how to see the future so you can SHINE in the present.

Watch any superhero movie and there's always a moment of crisis when the bad guy seems to be winning, and winning big. In fact, not only does the bad guy seem to be in control, but he seems unbeatable. There does not seem any point in opposing or resisting. Most people either fall into dejected submission or into conspiratorial assistance. They either go into hiding or join the bad guys. This is when the hero appears on the scene and gets to work.

For Daniel and the Jews, this was a reality. They were living in a crisis where evil appeared to have no limits. They were God's chosen people, yet they had been taken captive by force to a foreign land. Their friends and family were either dead or exiled to another country. The nations that conquered them had been conquered. Surrounded by profound evil, and moral decline, hope was in short supply. Just when it seemed that nothing would stop these evil forces from overwhelming them, Daniel was given the vision of God's plan that would inspire hope in the present and faith in the future.

The first half of Daniel, chapters 1–6, chronicles the adventures of 4 Hebrew immigrants seeking to live faithfully in the midst of a hostile culture. These chapters are written in Aramaic, the language of Babylon, because the focus is to "shine like stars" when living in Babylon.

Chapter 7 and 8 shift back to the Hebrew language, because these prophecies are specifically given to God's people to prepare them for the future. Up to this point, the dreams in the book of Daniel have been given to pagan kings and Daniel is the interpreter. Now, Daniel, himself, is the dreamer. His dreams teach us how to see the future so that we can shine in the present.

These dreams in chapter 7 and 8 reveal wild images that foretell a story about the true nature of evil and the ultimate plan of God. At first, pictures of lopsided bears, leopards with wings, talking horns, and a chariot with wheels of fire seem like outrageous works of overpriced art. However, running through these colorful details is a simple, easy to follow message weaving its way through it. Spoiler alert...in the end God wins and that makes all the difference in how we live today.

There is an evil still at work in the world today that is the antichrist. Throughout the ages the spirit of the antichrist has had one goal; to separate God's people from God himself. And while circumstance might imply that evil is winning, take heart, God is still in control. He still rules over everything. He is still sovereign. In fact, God is at work in every disaster, every difficulty, working out His plan and His purpose. That means that your setback is just a setup for God to show His glory and redeem your story. So, don't worry, trust Him, and keep going. God's got this!



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SHARE (5-10 min)

1. Icebreaker Question: What excites you about the future? What worries you about the future?

STUDY (about 30 min) Read Daniel 7:1-28, 8:5-25

2. What about the message on Sunday, and this passage, stood out to you?
3. In the first half of chapter 7, Daniel records his dream then seeks an interpretation. What does he seem to focus on? What elements of the dream worry Daniel? Why?

"History supports the accuracy of Daniel's interpretation. The Babylonian Empire ruled until the Medes and Persians overtook Babylon in 539 BC. Then, in 331 BC, Alexander the Great conquered Babylon. Rome's power flourished elsewhere soon after Babylon had essentially been dismantled and the inhabitants dispersed." ~ The Wiersbe Bible Study Series: Daniel.

4. Why is it important that history backs up Daniel's prophecies? What does this suggest about the rest of Daniel's prophecies that haven't yet been fulfilled?
5. Read Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14. What aspects of God's nature and power does Daniel describe in the Ancient of Days? What is emphasized in the description of the Son of Man?
6. Read Daniel 8:21-25, 2 Thessalonians 2:3-8, and Revelation 13:1-10. How are these descriptions of the antichrist similar?
7. In what ways do you see the spirit of the antichrist working in our world today? What aspects of our culture would enable a global leader like the antichrist?
8. How does knowing that God will accomplish His plan in the end encourage you? How does this impact your everyday life and relationships? How does it impact how you face difficulties and setbacks?

SUPPORT (15 min)

What are some effective strategies on sharing the Gospel with others? Ask God for an opportunity to share the Gospel with those around you who are not yet believers.