



## The Good, the Bad and the Glory of God

### RECAP

**This week's focus: Even when we cannot see it, God's plan is falling together.**

Many great stories involve chapters where the characters go through something that, at the time, feels chaotic, tedious, or tragic, only to learn later that it was all part of the plan. In Star Wars, Luke Skywalker crashed his starfighter into a lake and was stranded in the Dagobah system. His quest to become a Jedi seemed to be doomed. However, it was there in the swamp that he met master Yoda. The point is, a lot of things that turn out quite well have sad, confusing chapters, but they're all part of the plan. That's Daniel's message to us in his last 3 chapters. Things are dark, he says, and they are about to get darker. But don't despair; God's plan is falling together.

When we opened the book in Chapter 1, Daniel was a teenager taken as an exile, a slave, and a prisoner of war. In his teen years, he was forced to walk over 600 miles to the nation of Babylon. He was given a new name, educated into a new culture, emasculated, and forced to serve the king. For the entire book of Daniel, he lives his life in captivity.

By the time we get to chapters 10, 11, and 12, Daniel is in his 80s or 90s. Now as he nears the end of his life, he is peering into the future where God reveals to him a vision beyond the horizon of his life. Once again, God pulls back the curtain of the natural realm and reveals the supernatural. Daniel is shown an eternal calendar of events that cannot be erased. As to be expected, Daniel is overcome with fear, shock, and grief at what awaits mankind. Unable to understand all of what is being revealed he faithfully preserves and delivers the message to us.

In Daniel 10, he encounters angelic beings fighting a spiritual battle in an invisible war. This is revealing to us the reality of the spiritual warfare taking place behind the scenes. Then in Daniel 11, scholars tell us that there are 135 prophecies that have been fulfilled in the first 35 verses. Showing us that God can be trusted for the future.

Daniel's foretelling of future events can be overwhelming, perplexing, and sometimes a little strange. However, the purpose of biblical prophecy is not to put you in a state of confusion. Biblical prophecy exists to give you confidence in God. Prophecy shows us that God knows the future and He has a plan. These pictures of the future are given to us so that we can look forward with confidence to the coming of Jesus Christ.

The purpose of these final chapters in Daniel is not to be distracted by dates, events and the characters of the end times. The purpose is to encourage God's people to fix their eyes on Jesus Christ, the author and perfecter of our faith. That means the God who fulfilled all the prophecies up until today can be trusted for tomorrow. You can rest assured that God has a future planned and prepared for you.

This book has been written to encourage you to stop looking out at the culture around you and look up to the Savior. To "Shine like Stars" especially when it's dark. To trust that God is working even when you can't see it. Whatever difficulty you are faced with today, it won't last forever. One day you will experience the power of the resurrection and see "face to face". Then, all the sad and difficult chapters in your life will make sense. God promises to come and restore it all. He had the first word, and He will have the last.



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### SHARE (5-10 min)

1. Icebreaker Questions: What is been the best vacation you have been on?

### STUDY (about 30 min) Read Daniel 10-12

2. What about the message on Sunday and this passage stood out to you? What is the primary takeaway from Daniel 10-12?
3. Read Daniel 10:1-3 & 15-17. Why do you think Daniel had this kind of response?
4. What can you learn about the messengers that appear in Daniel 10?
5. Daniel predicts a final kingdom on earth. What are the characteristics of this kingdom listed in 11:10-30?
6. How do you know if suffering is from God to help you return to Him or if it is persecution from the enemy? What does persecution look like in our world?
7. Read Daniel 12:2 and 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17. What makes the promise of the resurrection so powerful? Why does the resurrection play a central role in Christian teaching?
8. What is your take on all the visions, numbers, and symbols as well as the promises that you cannot figure out? What are we supposed to do with all of this?
9. How do these prophecies in Daniel give you hope? What difference do they make in your everyday life?

### SUPPORT (15 min)

Pray: Please pray for Easter Weekend at GateWay (Good Friday, Eggapalooza, and Easter Services). Pray that God would use these moments to draw everyone closer to Him.

Also pray for one another. Ask God to help you understand His Word and trust in His plan as you navigate life together.