

Daniel 11 – Game of Thrones

The Focus of History

1. Why are the incredible volume, detail, and accuracy of the prophecies in this chapter significant? What do they show us about God and His word?
2. Despite the prominent leaders, armies, and geopolitical events at hand, the focus is still on God and what He is doing in the world in and through His people. In what ways can it be easy to become distracted and lose sight of what is most important amidst the chaos of our world today?
3. What does it mean to fix our eyes on God and be attentive to what He is doing in the world? How can we do that more intentionally?

The Futility of History

Then he shall turn his face back toward the fortresses of his own land, but he shall stumble and fall, and shall not be found. "Then shall arise in his place one who shall send an exactor of tribute for the glory of the kingdom. But within a few days he shall be broken, neither in anger nor in battle. -Daniel 11:19-20

1. Why do you think God goes to great lengths to show us that every earthly leader, regime, and system that rises and seems so powerful will ultimately fall and count for nothing?
2. How is that truth encouraging to you?
3. How is that truth a sobering wake-up call about putting our trust, hope and security in any power of this world? What are some things (social, financial, political, etc) that we might look to for fulfilment, safety, comfort, or hope that are ultimately futile?

"No kingdom of man can achieve what belongs to us in the Kingdom of God. That is the futility of history"

I have seen everything that is done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and a striving after wind. -Ecclesiastes 1:14

Man is like a breath; his days are like a passing shadow. -Psalm 144:4

The Ferocity of History

Forces from him shall appear and profane the temple and fortress, and shall take away the regular burnt offering. And they shall set up the abomination that makes desolate. He shall seduce with flattery those who violate the covenant, but the people who know their God shall stand firm and take action. And the wise among the people shall make many understand, though for some days they shall stumble by sword and flame, by captivity and plunder. When they stumble, they shall receive a little help. And many shall join themselves to them with flattery, and some of the wise shall stumble, so that they may be refined, purified, and made white, until the time of the end, for it still awaits the appointed time. "And the king shall do as he wills. He shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak astonishing things against the God of gods. He shall prosper till the indignation is accomplished; for what is decreed shall be done. -Daniel 11:31-36

1. What do you notice in the details about how the rulers will oppose God's people? (War against the holy covenant v30, seducing some to turn away from God and the covenant themselves v30,32, setting up idol worship and the abomination in the place of true sacrifices to Yahweh v31, exalting and magnifying himself as a god v36, and will prosper for an allotted time v36)
2. What parallels do you see in the opposition and seduction of believers by the ruling power of our world and culture today?
3. What is the encouragement in v32 to those who know and love God?
4. What does it mean and practically look like to stand firm against the pressure to turn from God and conform to the pattern of this world? To take action? (See v33)
5. How are you involved in the passing on of the truths of the gospel? Who are you discipling, building-into, teaching, sharing your faith with?

Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong. Do everything in love. -1 Corinthians 16:13-14

Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end. As it is said, "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion." -Hebrews 3:12-15

One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts. -Psalm 145:4

The Future of History

And he shall pitch his palatial tents between the sea and the glorious holy mountain. Yet he shall come to his end, with none to help him. -Daniel 11:45

1. God not only knows, but rules over every intricate detail of the future. Consider that, "God *has* done something, He *is* doing something, and He *will* do something". How does this encourage your heart and strengthen your resolve in the midst of whatever circumstances you as an individual, and we as the Church are facing?