



Unshakable Faith

THE BOOK OF DANIEL

Week 11

Theme: Loyalty (Chapter 11)

Weekly Memory Verse

“But the people who are loyal to their God shall stand firm and take action.”

– Daniel 11:32

Day 1: Nobility

Prayer of Illumination

Deliver me from any disbelief regarding your loving presence in my life. Deliver me from the fear of being asked to give more than I have. Deliver me from lies I believe regarding my worth; or that my struggles have no meaning. Deliver me from the fear of what real love demands. Instead, place in me an unconquerable desire to love the people you bring to my sphere of influence with selfless love. Amen.

Reading

Read Chapter 11 entirely, then focus on Daniel 11:1-10.

Meditation

What is the Lord revealing to you today through Daniel 11:1-10?

What do these verses say about God’s character?

How does this apply to us today?

Contemplation

Daniel 11:1 reads as if Daniel is taking a stand to protect the tyrant Darius. Knowing Daniel’s value for love, surprisingly, it’s not Daniel -- but one of his angels. What in the world is an angel doing taking a stand for Darius?

What's God doing? Yet this angel and Daniel (called "highly esteemed"), do lend Darius support. They're on a godly assignment, ministering to people, but not of their choice.

Simon Sinek says, "Leadership requires two things: a vision for a world that does not yet exist and the ability to communicate it." In Babylon, Daniel communicates leadership through wisdom and tact. Did Daniel forget his exile? He even makes statements of consolation to Darius like "May the King live forever!" Why?

Darius personifies Daniel's enemy. He was kidnapped from Israel's royal courts, yet confidently serves several evil administrations. How does one take a stand, support, and protect a dictatorial king?

Daniel's vision for his own life is to remain noble. Nobility defined is: virtuous, incorruptible, honorable, and magnanimous.

Like Daniel, you are nobility: "You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation..." (1 Peter 2:9). Could you see yourself being a Daniel? Could you see yourself remaining noble no matter what the assignment, even to those with whom you disagree? Could you see yourself becoming this kind of cultural architect?

Reflection

What virtues of nobility do you want to grow in:

Creating a culture of honor in your workplace?

Becoming magnanimous like our Father?

Loving people around you without an agenda?

Has it ever occurred to you that, when it comes to the most difficult people in your life, perhaps God feels you are the only person He can trust to bring His love into their lives?

Would you be willing to let your noble character carry you anywhere? Even if it meant serving in Nebuchadnezzar's palace?

Day 2: Prevail

Prayer of Illumination

Omniscient God, grant us knowledge to read Your Word and discern Your Truth. May You give Your people revelation -enough for us to withstand and enough to feed our souls. Help us Holy God to honor You. Amen.

Reading

Read Chapter 11 entirely, then focus on Daniel 11:11-19.

Meditation

What is the Lord revealing to you today through Daniel 11:11-19?

What do these verses say about the human condition?

How does this apply to us today?

Contemplation

In Daniel 11:11-19, we read the continuation of Daniel's vision, the one that so greatly disturbed him in Daniel 10. We can see the chaos play out in this prophetic picture, as two kingdoms continuously war against one another. Daniel's vision reveals the scheming and plotting that each side uses in an attempt to gain the upper hand. Each earthly ruler had a moment of prevailing against the enemy, and a moment of defeat. In verse 12 we read, "He will not remain triumphant," and in verse 17, "his plans will not succeed or help him." Both kingdoms ebbed and flowed in victory.

The vision does not explicitly state what will happen to God's people in this upheaval, but it is evident that the vision is not the future Daniel had hoped. The earthly rulers to come would not usher in the peace and prosperity he envisioned after a long exile. God's people would need to look past their present circumstances and chart a path forward in faithfulness amongst unknown territory.

Often in life, we want to know exactly what is going to happen next. We want to know the details of what is to come in the next season. We want to know how the crisis will play out, whether we will make it through a trial, whether justice will prevail. Yet, here in Daniel 11 we see that Daniel was troubled by the vision he received. When God showed him all the things that were to come, it was almost too much for him to physically bear.

The weight of knowing is one that God carries for us; He alone is omniscient. Though we may yearn to know the next page in our story, we ultimately know how the story will end. We know that God is the author, and as Ancient of Days, He will prevail. He will vindicate His people. God will win in the end, and His people will celebrate His victory with Him.

Reflection

Where in your life are you trying to figure it all out? Where do you need to surrender in faithfulness and trust God to write your story? Where do you need God to prevail in your life?

Day 3: Courage in Crisis

Prayer of Illumination

Father God, as we sit in Your Word, we wonder how will we stand in the midst of a crisis? Who will we run to? Lean in to? What is our initial gut reaction? Response? Help us to look to you. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Reading

Read Chapter 11 entirely, then focus on Daniel 11:20-35.

Meditation

What is the Lord revealing to you today through Daniel 11:20-35?

What do these verses say about God's character?

How does this apply to us today?

Contemplation

We know throughout this chapter, the angel is giving Daniel a prophecy of what is to come: the fall of a kingdom divided into four. The jockeying for power between the North and South kingdoms. The angel describes how each person in power goes about positioning themselves for more power. More dominion. The offering of a daughter. Seduction by flattery. Then the breaking of covenants as they go to battle.

Where are God's chosen ones? What is their part in this storyline? Do they have a part? What about us? Did you imagine living through such a time as this? Feeling so out of control? What do you anchor yourself in? *Who* do you anchor yourself to? In the middle of the prophecy there is a glimpse. A nugget. *"...but the people who know their God shall stand firm and take action. And the wise among the people shall make many understand..."*

Where is my "anchor?" Who or what have I tethered myself to?

Reflection

Sit with Lord God, journaling as you honestly answer these questions:

- Do I know the hope He is, in the midst of crisis?
- How does He stand for me?

Pray a prayer of revealing.

- How has He gifted me to take action?
- Where would He like me to start?

Day 4: Trust

Prayer of Illumination

Father God, pour out your Spirit on us that we may hear your ancient words in a new key. *Amen.*

Reading

Read Chapter 11 entirely, then focus on Daniel 11:36-45.

Meditation

What is the Lord revealing to you today through Daniel 11:36-45?

What do these verses say about God's character?

How does this apply to us today?

Contemplation

Houston, we have a problem! Up until this point, we can parallel the prophecy of Daniel 11 with actual historical events and people. But towards the end, we are introduced to a king. "He will do as he pleases. He will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will say unheard-of things against the God of gods." Some scholars argue that this part of the prophecy points to a distant future and the Antichrist.

We can dive into that conversation next week in Chapter 12. Right now, let's zoom into verse 45, the last one. After reading through all the horrible things this prideful king will commit to disrupt the world, we see how, "He will pitch his royal tents between the seas at the beautiful holy mountain. Yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him."

And like that, his reign comes to an end — like a cliffhanger in a Shonda Rhimes' TV series (for all the *Grey's Anatomy* and *Scandal* fans out there).

Let's be honest. This chapter leaves us with more questions than answers. However, one seems to rise to the top: *Will I trust the story?* Take a few moments to zoom out and wrestle. *How do you believe God's story of His kingdom will end? Do you trust it?*

Reflection

How do you believe God's story of His kingdom will end?

What does it look like to trust God's story?

Weekly Memory Verse

"But the people who are loyal to their God shall stand firm and take action."

– Daniel 11:32

Day 5: Pause & Reflect

Ask the Lord, journal, and pray through the following questions ...

God, what are some of the takeaways from Chapter 11 that you want to highlight in my life?

Spend time today posturing yourself to listen and reflect on each day's theme:

- Nobility
- Prevail
- Courage in Crisis
- Trust

What is one thing you are going to do in response to this week's message and reading plan, and who is going to hold you accountable?

Write down one takeaway and one action step in a journal to commit to it.

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