

## Community Group Sermon Notes May 17, 2026

---

Family & Discipleship Pastor, Philip Griffin

Series: Exiles in Babylon: Living as Strangers in a Fallen World

Sermon Title: Overcoming the Dark Days Ahead

Last Week of the Spring Term: Week 20 of 20 Note: Summer break begins next week. Restart Sept. 13.

---



**Ice breaker:** Pastor Philip shared a story about being trapped in a pitch-black cave with no visible way out. Have you ever experienced a situation or a season in life where you felt stuck, uncertain, or unable to see a way forward? What helped you keep going during that time?

---

### Read and Reflect on Daniel 11:1-45 with excerpts below:

#### Daniel 11:2-4

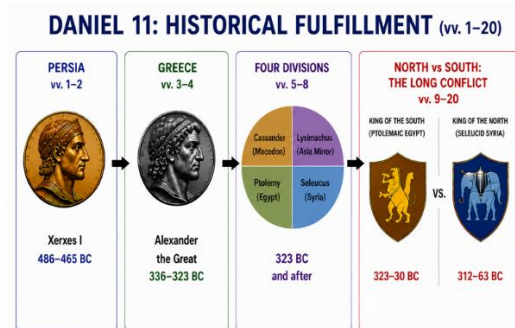
<sup>2</sup> “Now then, I tell you the truth: Three more kings will arise in Persia, and then a fourth, who will be far richer than all the others. When he has gained power by his wealth, he will stir up everyone against the kingdom of Greece. <sup>3</sup> Then a mighty king will arise, who will rule with great power and do as he pleases. <sup>4</sup> After he has arisen, his empire will be broken up and parceled out toward the four winds of heaven. It will not go to his descendants, nor will it have the power he exercised, because his empire will be uprooted and given to others.

#### Daniel 11:31-45

<sup>31</sup> “His armed forces will rise up to desecrate the temple fortress and will abolish the daily sacrifice. Then they will set up the abomination that causes desolation. <sup>32</sup> With flattery he will corrupt those who have violated the covenant, but the people who know their God will firmly resist him. <sup>33</sup> “Those who are wise will instruct many, though for a time they will fall by the sword or be burned or captured or plundered. <sup>34</sup> When they fall, they will receive a little help, and many who are not sincere will join them. <sup>35</sup> Some of the wise will stumble, so that they may be refined, purified and made spotless until the time of the end, for it will still come at the appointed time. <sup>36</sup> “The king 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. He will be successful until the time of wrath is completed, for what has been determined must take place. <sup>37</sup> He will show no regard for the gods of his ancestors or for the one desired by women, nor will he regard any god, but will exalt himself above them all. <sup>38</sup> Instead of them, he will honor a god of fortresses; a god unknown to his ancestors he will honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and costly gifts. <sup>39</sup> He will attack the mightiest fortresses with the help of a foreign god and will greatly honor those who acknowledge him. He will make them rulers over many people and will distribute the land at a price. <sup>40</sup> “At the time of the end the king of the South will engage him in battle, and the king of the North will storm out against him with chariots and cavalry and a great fleet of ships. He will invade many countries and sweep through them like a flood. <sup>41</sup> He will also invade the Beautiful Land. Many countries will fall, but Edom, Moab and the leaders of Ammon will be delivered from his hand. <sup>42</sup> He will extend his power over many countries; Egypt will not escape. <sup>43</sup> He will gain control of the treasures of gold and silver and all the riches of Egypt, with the Libyans and Cushites in submission. <sup>44</sup> But reports from the east and the north will alarm him, and he will set out in a great rage to destroy and annihilate many. <sup>45</sup> 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.

### Sermon and Scripture Application Discussion:

1. **Why does God give prophecy** and warnings about dark days? (Daniel 11:2-35; 2 Peter 1:19, Isaiah 46:9-10, Romans 15:4, see Daniel 11 historical fulfillment chart & Antichrist chart below). What does Daniel 11 teach us about God’s control over history and future events? Why do you think God gives His people warnings about difficult times to come? In what ways can God’s Word act as “a light shining in a dark place” in our lives today?



**DANIEL 11: THE CHARACTER OF THE ANTICHRIST** (vv. 36-45)



- 1 He will do as he pleases.
- 2 He will exalt himself above every god and speak against the one true God.
- 3 He will succeed and do much damage for a time.
- 4 He will reject the god of his ancestors.
- 5 He will have no regard for Jesus.
- 6 He will worship power and military might.
- 7 He will reward those who follow him and persecute those who don't.
- 8 He will go to war and be defeated in one final battle.

2. **Know God Personally.** What is the difference between knowing about God and truly knowing Him personally? (Daniel 11:32b, John 10:14, 27, Psalm 23). How does intimacy with God produce courage, endurance, and discernment? In what area of your life do you most need to experience the Psalm 23 “pronoun change” — moving from knowing about God to personally experiencing His presence?

3. **Endure Trials with Faith.** How can suffering refine and mature our faith? (Daniel 11:35; James 1:2-4 Romans 5:3-5, 1 Peter 1:6-7). How can trials expose weaknesses and deepen our dependence on God? What does it mean for faith to be “refined” like gold? How can the COS community help us stay strong during dark seasons? If you or someone you knew stood up for prayer because they are going through a difficult time, how can you encourage and support them this week?

5. **Hope in God’s Victory.** How does the promise of God’s final victory give us hope today? (Daniel 11:45b, Revelation 21:1-5, Romans 8:18, John 16:33) How does the promise of God’s final victory help us endure present suffering? What areas of your life are hardest to trust God with right now? How can we live with hope while still honestly acknowledging pain and suffering?

**Closing Prayer:** Lord, thank You for being our light in dark places and our hope in difficult seasons. Help us to know You personally, endure trials faithfully, and trust in Your ultimate victory. Strengthen our faith so that no matter what comes, we will stand firm and follow You closely.

**Faith in Action:**

- June 7 – Vison Day & Picnic, COS Campus
- June 14 – Annual Business Meeting, 11:45 AM, Sanctuary
- June 22-26 – Summer Bible Camp, 9 AM, 3 y/o – rising 6<sup>th</sup> graders