

REVIEW

What did you learn about Daniel that you hadn't realized before? How can understanding the context of Daniel's stories help you see beyond the lion's den or the fiery furnace?

After watching Steve and Jeanne Bessant's tragic story of losing their son, what surprised you about what they shared? In what ways did God surprise them?

BIBLE EXPLORATION

Jeremiah 29:11: How has this well-known verse offered you comfort? And yet, how does knowing this verse was written to a people who would remain in exile give you additional hope?

Jeremiah 28:1–17: What did Hananiah the Seer do wrong? What was Jeremiah's reaction? Who today utters this same prophecy, that all will be well? How does believing that influence the way you deal with further difficulties?

John 16:33: How does knowing the truth that pain and trials will be part of our life help you face them today? How does knowing that Jesus has overcome the world help you during your darkest trials?

Hebrews 12:4–11: Who does God discipline? Why does He discipline His children? If you have children, why do you discipline them? Do they always enjoy it? But what is the greater purpose?

Daniel 3:1–15: How did the king blaspheme God? How does Nebuchadnezzar's demand of the people echo Satan's request to Jesus during His temptation in the wilderness?

Habakkuk 3:16–19: What does this Scripture tell us about the character of God? Does God always promise deliverance? And what did Habakkuk choose to do in the midst of a failed crop, starvation, and deprivation? How does Habakkuk's response help you to face your current trials?

What are 3 situations in your life where you currently need a Daniel-like perspective?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Consider the list above. what is one way you can, like Habakkuk, choose to praise God in the midst of your “exile”?

What is one source of media negativity you can fast from this week?

What stands in the way of you believing God is working all things for good behind the scenes (See Romans 8:28)?

How can a strong, Daniel-like belief in God's rule over everything help you put your current circumstances in perspective?

DEEPER WALK

Select at least one activity below to complete during the next week.

- **Personal Action:** Fast from whatever media platform causes you the most stress and worry. Recount how the fast changed your perspective.
- **Mentoring:** Who do you know right now who, like Daniel, has trusted God in the midst of a painful/difficult circumstance? Ask this question: What helped you thrive in the midst of a painful trial? What gives you peace when the culture seems to be getting crazier and more godless?
- **Conversation:** Talk to a significant friend or group of friends about the three things you listed in the Last Word section. Ask for input about how you can experience God's presence in the midst of those difficulties. Ask your friends what their list of three would be. End the time praying directly and specifically for each other.
- **Memorization:** Write down Habakkuk 3:17–18 on a 3 x 5 card, then keep it with you in an obvious place (purse, wallet, car, mirror). Read and memorize it when life feels out of control.
- **Pray:** Ask God to give you His perspective on a painful situation. Ask Him to teach you what it means to thrive in Babylon.
- **Read:** For deeper study on the topics we talked about this week, read chapters 1–4 in *Thriving in Babylon: Why Hope, Humility, and Wisdom Matter in a Godless Culture*.