



STANDING STRONG IN TRYING TIMES

The Book of Daniel

Strangers In A Strange Land

Key idea:

To stand strong in trying times, we must know that God is Sovereign and faithful, even in the land of our exile.

Key text:

Daniel 1:1-2

In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. ² And the Lord delivered Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the articles from the temple of God. These he carried off to the temple of his god in Babylonia and put in the treasure house of his god.

Key points:

1. Daniel and his friends were among the first people exiled to Babylon in 605BC.
2. The exile appeared to be a total disaster, as God's people and the articles for worship from the Temple were sent back to Shinar (Babylon) the place which God had called Abraham to leave and go to the Promised Land.
3. God was Sovereign over the exile, using the Babylonians to accomplish His will and fulfill His Word.
4. The people of Israel were sent into exile because they broke God's covenant, but He promised to use this to draw them back to Himself.
5. Old Testament Israel became exiles because of their sin of breaking the covenant, but in the New Covenant God's people are exiles in every age and place by God's own design. We always live as strangers in a strange land.

Questions for discussion/application:

1. What part of Sunday's teaching stood out most to me? Why?
2. Daniel was in his teens when he was taken into exile. What questions, doubts, and concerns do I think a young teen would face when exiled from all they had known?

3. What part of the experience of the exile would be most difficult for me? Why?
4. In God's covenant with Israel, He warned they would be exiled if they broke the covenant. How is this like God's covenant with Adam and Eve in the garden? How is it different from the New Covenant?
5. Why does the book of Daniel begin with this account of the exile? Why is the idea that God was Sovereign in all of this so important for me to understand as I study this book?
6. In Jeremiah 29 there is a letter Jeremiah sent to the exiles (including Daniel). In it, he rebukes prophets who told the people the exile would be very short and God would restore them to the promised land. Jeremiah informs them it will last 70 years - so they will never see their old home again. Why were these prophets so tempted to say the exile would be short? How is this a temptation for me today?
7. If I were to move to a different country what parts of the new culture would I find unusual? What parts of my own life and culture would mark me as different in the new country? How does this apply to my status as a spiritual exile?
8. As I consider America, my land of exile, what parts of culture are particularly foreign to me as a Christian? What trends do I see that make me realize I am an exile in my own country?
9. When I consider current trends, which ones make it hardest for me to trust in God's Sovereignty? How can I prepare now so that I do not compromise?
10. Who will I call or see to encourage this week?

For Further Study:

[The Church - God's Nation of Exiles](#) (October 31, 2020)

[Peace for the City](#) (May 3, 2015)

[Encouragement for God's Sojourning Exiles](#) (September 5, 2010)

[Living As God's Exile People](#) (July 11, 2010)

[God's Chosen Exile People](#) (May 23, 2010)

[Living As Citizens of Two Kingdoms](#) (January 16, 2011)

Preview of next week: Standing Strong In Exile (Daniel 1:3-21)