



# STANDING STRONG IN TRYING TIMES

The Book of Daniel

## Thriving In Exile

### Key idea:

To thrive in our exile, we must labor to see others experience shalom, remember that our God is the Living, Eternal God, that the kingdoms of this world pass away but that God's Kingdom endures forever, and that God rescues and saves His people into His kingdom.

### Key text:

Daniel 6:25-28

Then King Darius wrote to all the peoples, nations and men of every language throughout the land: "May you prosper greatly!"<sup>26</sup> "I issue a decree that in every part of my kingdom people must fear and reverence the God of Daniel. "For he is the living God and he endures forever; his kingdom will not be destroyed, his dominion will never end."<sup>27</sup> He rescues and he saves; he performs signs and wonders in the heavens and on the earth. He has rescued Daniel from the power of the lions."<sup>28</sup> So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

### Key points:

1. Daniel thrived throughout the exile, under both the Babylonians and the Persians.
2. Darius' decree serves as a close to the first half of the book, and his words were guided by the LORD to teach us how to thrive in exile.
3. To thrive exiles must labor to see others experience shalom.
4. To thrive exiles must remember that the kingdoms of this world pass away, but the Kingdom of God endures forever!
5. To thrive exiles must remember that our God rescues and saves His people!

### Questions for discussion/application:

1. What part of Sunday's teaching stood out most to me? Why?
2. Bret mentioned Admiral Stockdale's observation that those who thought their time as a POW would be short did not survive (total optimist), nor did those who thought they would never return home (total pessimist). Only those who knew they would get home but that it would be a long time full of difficulty and suffering

survived (a realist). When I consider these options, which is more my “natural” bent? What should I do in light of this to make sure I am neither overly optimistic nor overly pessimistic?

3. Have I ever thought about Darius’ decree as summing up the lessons of Daniel 1-6? What clues in the text help me to see this so that I can learn from it?
4. Why is it imperative that God’s exile people have a desire to not only experience shalom themselves but to labor to see others experience it as well? What places can I see in Scripture that give the principle that we are to be ministers of God’s grace and blessings to others?
5. Do I find it hard to continue to pray and labor for others to experience shalom in my current experience of exile? How can I stir up a desire to pass God’s blessings on to others - even if they revile or do evil to me?
6. Darius’ decree stresses the everlasting nature of both God and His kingdom. Why must I meditate on this reality to thrive as an exile? Why is this hard for me to remember?
7. Do I find it harder to remember and believe that God is able and does deliver His people from suffering in this life, or that He sometimes chooses to not deliver His people in this life but rather in the resurrection?
8. Who will I call or see to encourage this week?

### **For Further Study:**

[Christ, the Church, Christians, and Culture \(series\)](#) (2010-2011)

[The Beautiful Community - Mission](#) (August 9, 2020)

[The Covenant of Promise](#) (February 23, 2020)

[The Basis of Mission: God’s Heart for the Nations](#) (September 18, 2016)

[Understanding Our Calling](#) (September 30, 2012)

[Guarded By Our Covenant God](#) (November 30, 2008)

[Blessed - To Be A Blessing](#) (October 21, 2007)

[Who Is God?](#) (August 11, 2019)

**Preview of next week: The Kingdoms of This World and the Kingdom of God (Daniel 7)**