



Chronological Bible Study

Week 28:

Keeping His Word

Daniel 1-4

2 Kings 24

Jeremiah 25, 27-29, 48-52

2 Chronicles 36

Ezekiel 1-3

Ezekiel Prayer

Suzanne Davis Harden

Inspired by Ezekiel's
Vision & Matthew
Henry's Interpretation





roductions

What was the first car you bought?

Questions?

Comments?

**Summary of
This Week's
Readings**

- Daniel's Time in Babylon
- Zedekiah's Alliances and Conference
- Jeremiah's Letter to the Exiles
- Oracles Against Babylon
- The Book of Ezekiel
- Rebellion Against Babylon

e Book of Daniel

[Video Link](#)



Historical Context

Jehoiakim king of Judah in 609 BC

Egyptian alliance fails to protect Judah

Jerusalem yields to Babylon in 605 BC.

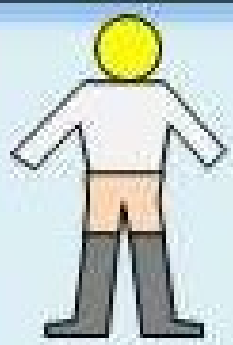




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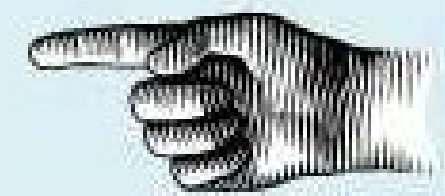
Feast of
King's
Food



Four
kingdom
vision



Fiery
furnace



Handwriting
on the wall



In the
lion's den

Overview of the Book of Daniel

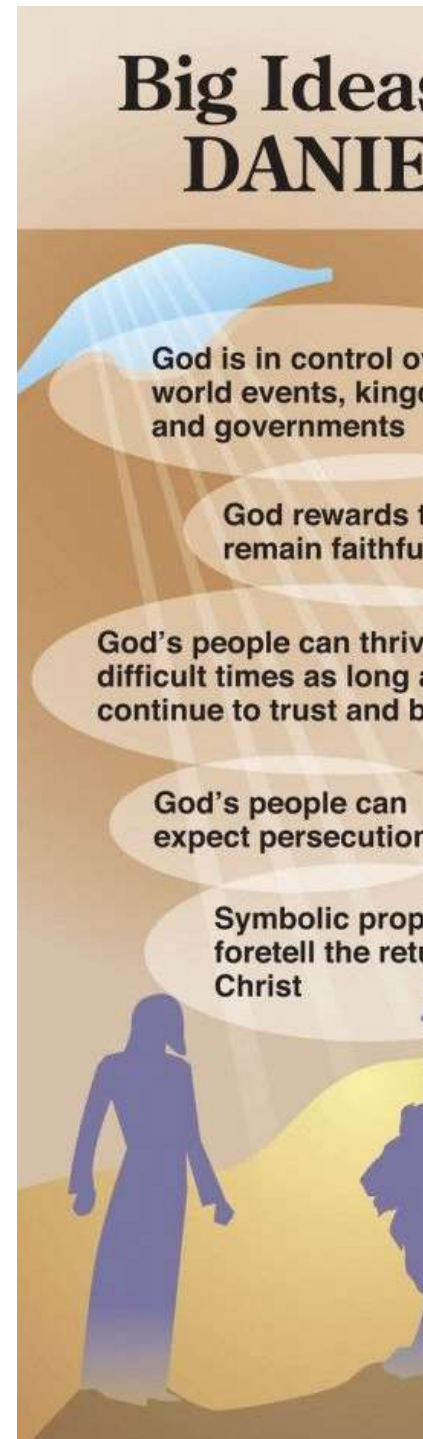
Author: traditionally Daniel but recently there has been some controversy among scholars

Date: Stories are all set between 605 and 537/536 BC.

Setting: The royal court in Babylon, where Daniel lived.

Purpose: encourage those living during times of oppression and persecution.

Key Themes: God's sovereignty





Key Themes of Daniel

- God's Sovereignty
- The Kingdom of God
- How people should live in a world torn by evil forces.

ouchadnezzar

[Video Link](#)

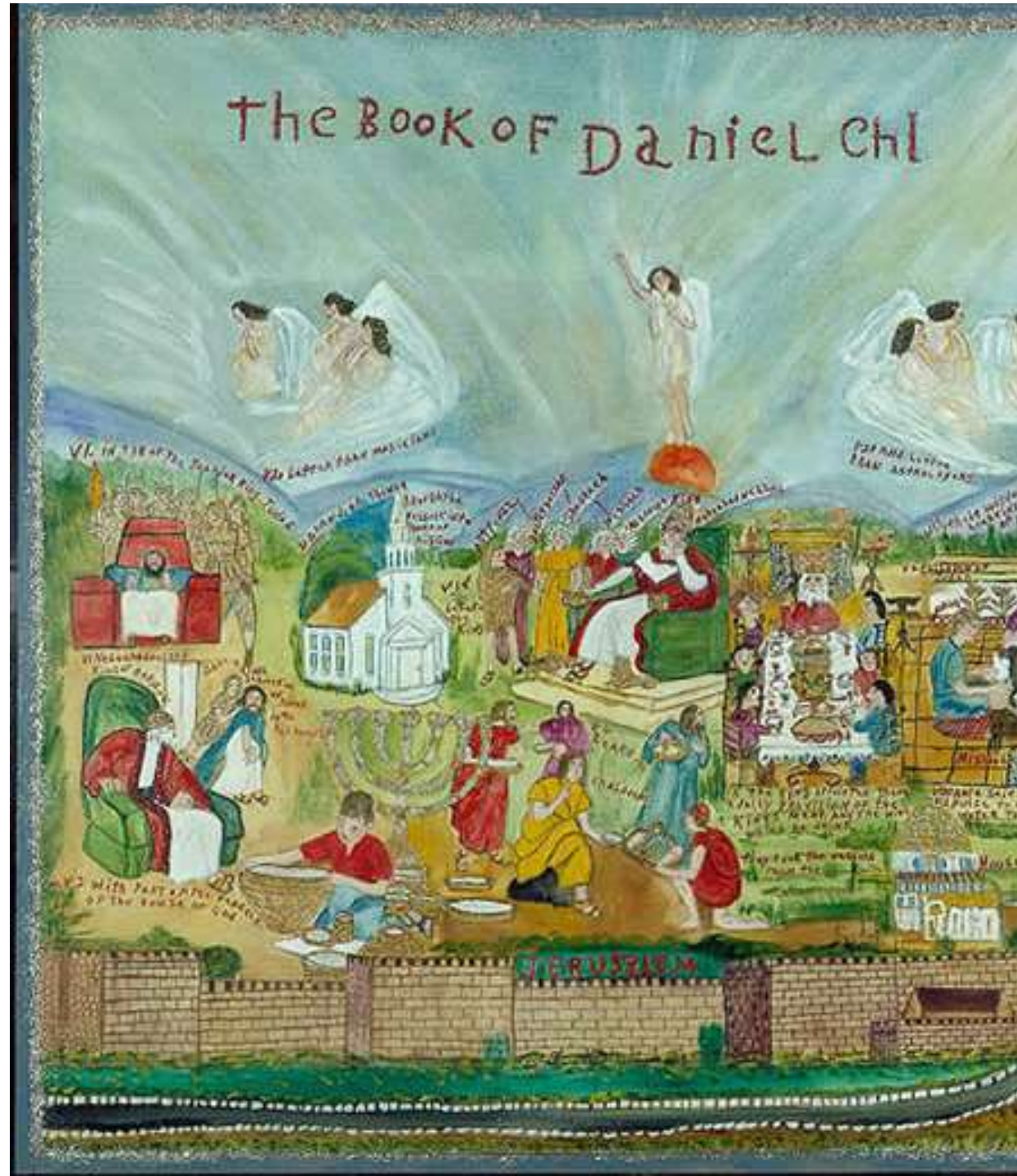


Court Narratives

How Daniel and his friends come to Babylon

Court Contests

Court Conflicts



Life in a Foreign Court

Daniel's training in Babylon

New names

The King's food

The blazing furnace

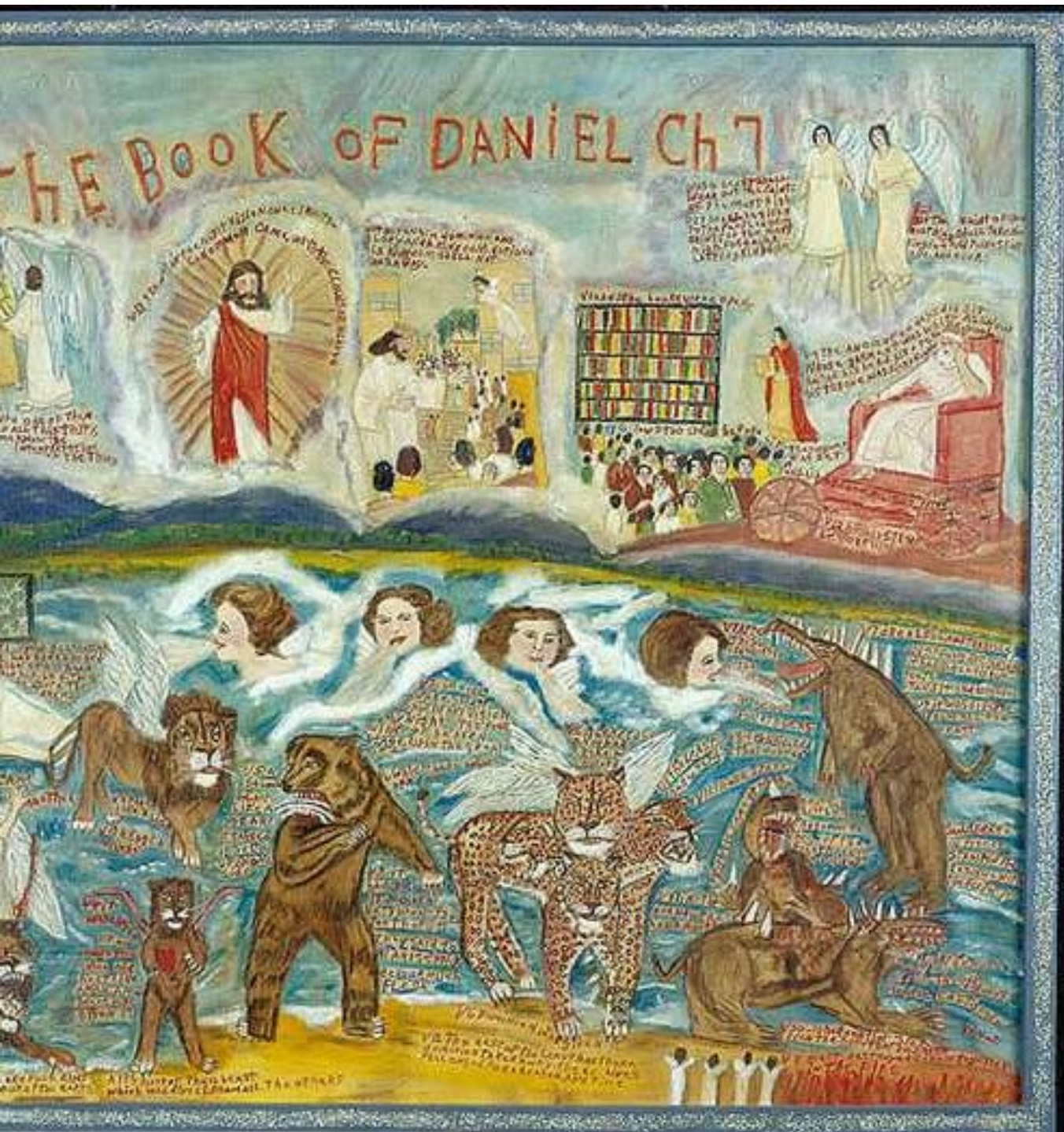




Discussion

How in these stories does Daniel demonstrate the nature of true faith?

How do you think many modern churchgoers would have dealt with the dire predicament the three men faced here? How would we have been tempted to compromise?



Daniel's Visions

- Four apocalyptic visions (chapters 7-12) to comfort people who are suffering from oppression
- Intense imagery
- Symbolic use of numbers
- Announce destruction of oppressive forces



Interpreting the King's Dream

- Daniel can interpret a dream the Babylonian wise men can not.
- Daniel's life was at stake – he would be killed if he failed.
- Daniel attributes his interpretation to God and praises him.
- Human kingdoms are temporary – only the Kingdom of God is eternal.

The Kingdoms and King Nebuchadnezzar's Dream



NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM

(Daniel 2)

HEAD (FINE GOLD)

The golden head of the statue represents the kingdom of Babylon which God gave King Nebuchadnezzar to rule. (Daniel 2:37, 38)

DANIEL'S VISION

(Daniel 7)

LION

With Wings of an Eagle

In Scripture, Nebuchadnezzar is compared to both the lion (Jeremiah 4:7; 50:44) and the eagle (Ezekiel 17:3, 11, 12). Images of lions with eagle's wings were popular in Babylonian architecture and currency. (Daniel 7:4)

THE KINGDOMS

(Daniel 2, 7, and 8)

BABYLONIA

605 BC – 539 BC

King Nebuchadnezzar to Belshazzar

CHEST AND ARMS (SILVER)

The silver chest and arms of the statue represent the kingdoms of Media and Persia, which is the second power that would rise after Babylon falls. (Daniel 2:39, Daniel 7:5)

BEAR

With Three Ribs on its Mouth

The bear was raised on one side, which may illustrate the dominance of Persia over Media. The three ribs in its mouth may illustrate the three major empires Persia conquered. The bear is commanded to devour much flesh, which may be a reference to Persia's military expansion throughout the ancient world. (Daniel 7:5) Persia is also symbolized by a ram. (Daniel 8)

MEDO-PERSIA

539 BC – 332 BC

King Cyrus to King Darius III

BELLY AND THIGHS (BRONZE)

The bronze belly and thighs of the statue represent the kingdom of Greece. This third kingdom would rule over the whole earth. (Daniel 2:39).

LEOPARD

With Four Wings and Four Heads

The leopard represents the kingdom of Greece. The wings might illustrate the speed of Alexander the Great's conquest. The four heads might represent the division of Alexander's kingdom into four provinces after Alexander's death. (Daniel 7:6) Greece is also symbolized by a goat. (Daniel 8)

GREECE

332 BC – 63 BC

Alexander the Great and the Four Divisions

LEGS (IRON)

The fourth kingdom would be strong as iron and would break, smash and crush things.

FEET (IRON AND CLAY)

The fourth kingdom would be a divided kingdom, different from the others, both strong and weak. This kingdom would have a mixture of people who are not united. (Daniel 2:41-43; 7:23)

BEAST

With Iron Teeth and Ten Horns

The terrifying beast is also a reference to a major kingdom. Many scholars suggest this to be the Roman empire. The beast's ten horns are ten kings that would rise from this kingdom. After them, another king (the "little horn") would rise, speak against God, and persecute God's people. It is during the reign of this king when God would set up his everlasting kingdom. (Daniel 7:7, 8)

A DIVIDED KINGDOM

Many scholars believe this kingdom to be Rome. Rome occupied Jerusalem in 63 BC and was still in power at the time of Jesus. (Luke 2:1)

STONE Cut from a Mountain

In Nebuchadnezzar's dream, a stone was cut out, not by human hands, and struck the statue on its feet and broke it to pieces. Then it became a great mountain that filled the whole earth. This symbolizes Jesus Christ initiating the kingdom of God that will reign forever and will never be destroyed.

SON OF MAN (Jesus Christ)

In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom will not be destroyed.

THE EVERLASTING KINGDOM OF GOD

Dream of a Tree

Only Daniel can interpret Nebuchadnezzar's second dream of a tree.

The tree represents mighty Babylon.

God requires the king to humble himself before God.

Nebuchadnezzar resists and is reduced to a mindless animal.

Nebuchadnezzar learns his lesson.





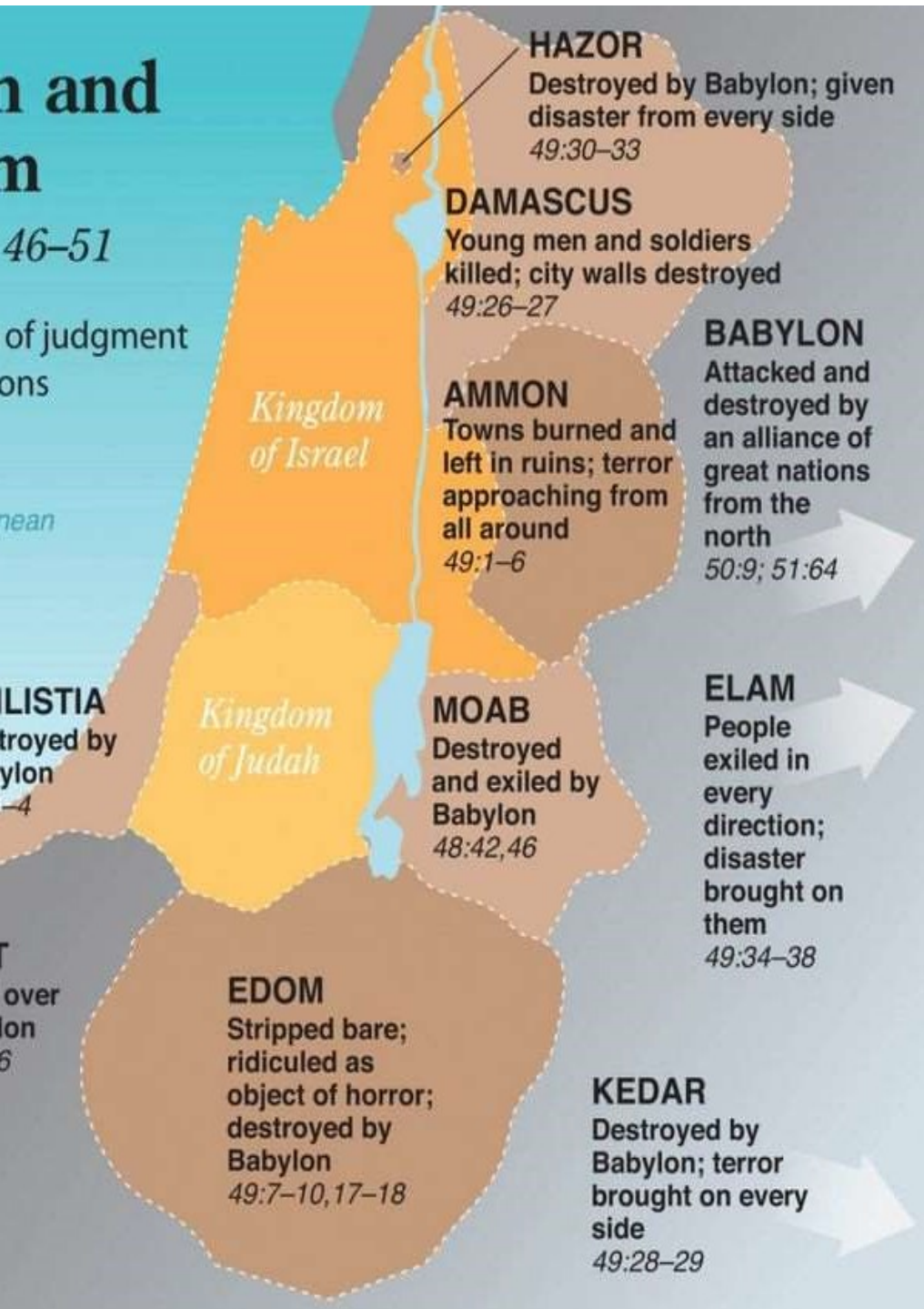
Discussion

What can we personally learn from Daniel's example as displayed in these verses about interpreting the king's dreams?

Daniel and Joseph

- Both were exiled
- Both can interpret dreams
- Both are promoted to positions of political power
- Both defied their non-Jewish societies
- Both given new names
- Both have their own dreams
- Both focus on God's sovereignty to preserve their people during their time of exile.





Judah to Serve Nebuchadnezzar

- God tells the nations they must surrender to Babylon
- They are not to believe false prophets
- Message given to surrounding nations as well as Judah
- Babylon will not reign forever.
- The Cup of God's Wrath

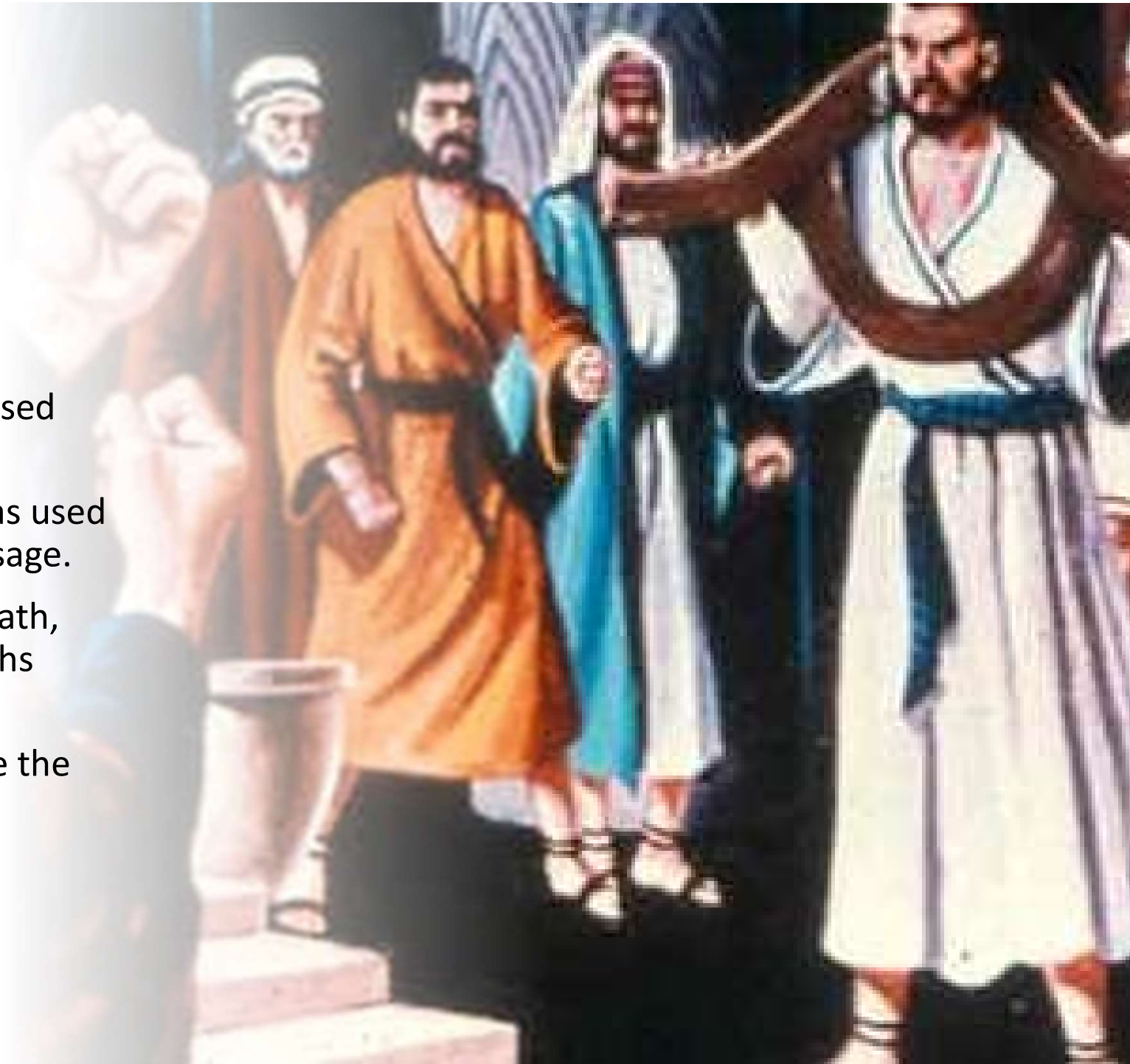
Hananiah

A false prophet who opposed Jeremiah.

He broke the yoke that was used as part of Jeremiah's message.

Jeremiah predicted his death, which occurred two months later.

Jeremiah was shown to be the true prophet.





A Message About Babylon

- Jeremiah delivers a message about Babylon
- It is a message of hope to Israel
- The people broke the old covenant, but the law will now be written on their hearts
- Babylon will be judged and the people will return to Judah

Bide Your Time

Jeremiah 29

God tells those in exile to make themselves at home in Babylon for the next 70 years but assures them that their stay there is not permanent



Build houses, plant gardens, marry, have children; seek peace and prosperity

PROMISE: *If Babylon prospers, exiles will prosper*



Don't be deceived by false prophets; call upon God and seek him

PROMISE: *God will listen to them, be found by them and prosper them*



Live in exile for 70 years

PROMISE: *God will bring them back to Judah after 70 years*

How to Live in Babylon

[Video Link](#)



Overview of Ezekiel

Author: Ezekiel (God strengthens)

Dates:

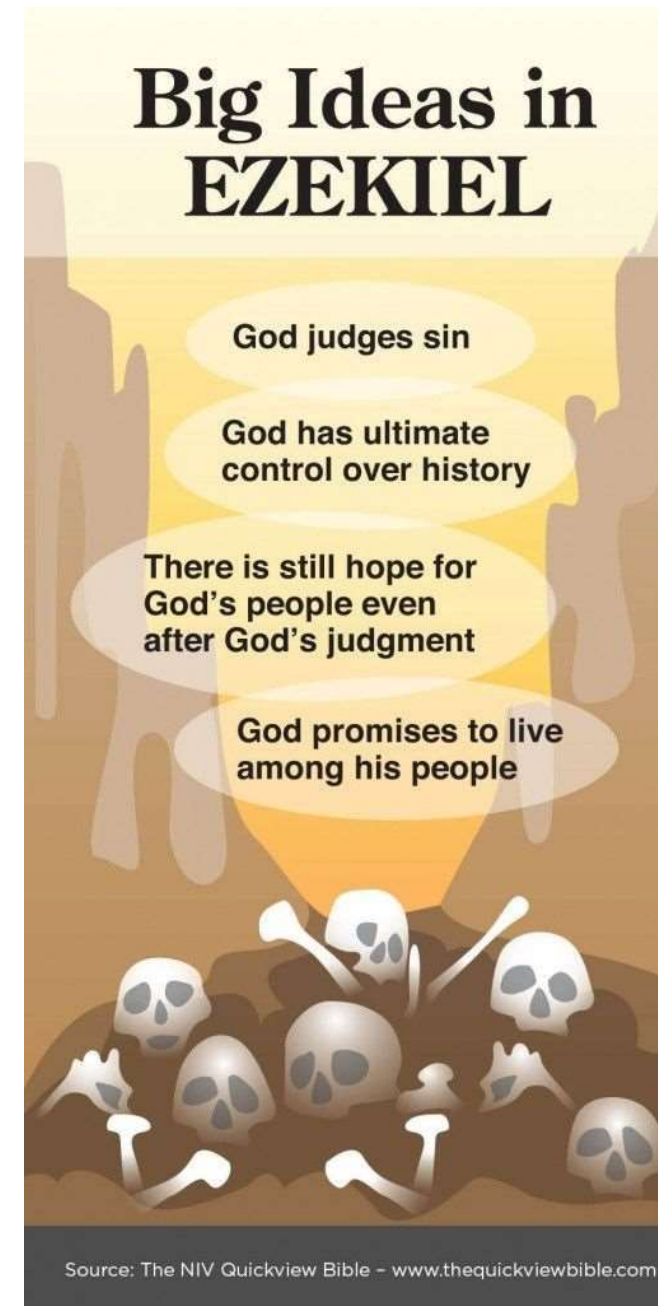
- Called 593 BC and ministered 22 years
- Ministry began 7 years before Jerusalem's destruction in 586 BC.
- He ministered for 14 years

Audience: Exiles in Babylon in 597 BC

Ezekiel designated as Israel's:

- Prophet
- Watchman
- Sign
- Judge
- Funeral Director

Contains much apocalyptic literature



The Book of Ezekiel (Part 1)

[Video Link](#)



Ezekiel's Inaugural Vision

Ezekiel partially sees and hears God as he is called to service and describes his vision.

An immense storm cloud starts the vision.

Four multi-directional creatures (cherubim) are described.

There was a wheel beside each creature.

A platform with a throne above is described.

God enthroned amid light





Discussion

How does Ezekiel's vision compare with your vision of God?
How does it challenge your notions of God's nature and appearance?

How might this image bring comfort to a people in exile?



Next Week

Readings For 4/23-29: God's Sword of Judgment

- Jeremiah 10:17-25; 21:1-22:9; 23:1-8; 30:1-34:22; 37:1-38:28; 46:13-28;
- 2 Chronicles 36:13-16
- Ezekiel 8:1-11:25; 13:1-18:32; 20:1-21; 22:1-22, 23:1-49

sing Song

Video Link



In response to Daniel’s faithfulness, God gives him powers to interpret dreams and symbols. Yet even this supernatural skill does not remove Daniel and his friends from situations that test their faith in God. Daniel’s life and prophecies gave the Jews exiled in Babylon, and us, hope and helped restore their faith in the sovereignty and presence of their God. God is in control and we can safely frame our lives on resolute trust in his care. Ezekiel receives a majestic vision of God to prepare him for his time of ministry. He relays a discouraging message of Jerusalem’s destruction to his people in exile; a prophecy that is realized by the end of this week’s reading.

Weekly Reading Plan (pg. 749-777)

Day 1: DA 1:1-4:37
 Day 2: 2 KI 24:18-19; JER 52:1- 2
 Day 3: JER 27:1-11; 48:1-49:39
 Day 4: JER 25:15-38; 27:12-28:17
 Day 5: JER 29:1-32
 Day 6: JER 50:1-51:64
 Day 7: 2 CH 36:11, 12; EZE 1:1-3:21;
 2 KI 24:20-25:3, JER 52:3-6

Outline

Daniel’s Time in Babylon [Day 1]
 Zedekiah’s Alliances [Day 2]
 Zedekiah’s Jerusalem Conference [Day 3-4]
 Letter to the Exiles [Day 5]
 Oracles Against Babylon [Day 6]
 Priestly Account: Zedekiah and Jeremiah [Day 7]
 Ezekiel: A Prophet in Exile [Day 7]
 Prophetic Account: Rebellion Against Babylon [Day 7]

Key Characters

Nebuchadnezzar	Daniel
Astrologers	Shadrach
Meshach	Abednego
Zedekiah	Hananiah
Jeremiah	

Key Locations

Babylon	Judah
Jerusalem	Moab
Edom	Damascus
Kedar	Hazor
Elam	

Key Terms

Dreams
 Visions
 Judgment
 Kingdoms

Key Verses

“In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself ensure forever.” [DA 2:44]

How great are his miracles, and how mighty his wonders! His kingdom is an eternal kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation. [DA 4:3]

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” [JER 29:11]

“This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time”, declares the Lord. “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God and they will be my people.” [JER 31:33]

Chapter Summaries (from @biblesummary)

Da1: Nebuchadnezzar brought the young nobles to Shinar. Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the king's food. God gave him wisdom.

Da2: Nebuchadnezzar had dreams. Daniel said, "God reveals mysteries. You saw a great statue broken by a stone. God will set up a kingdom."

Da3: Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego would not worship the gold statue. Nebuchadnezzar threw them into the furnace but God protected them.

Da4: "I, Nebuchadnezzar, dreamt of a tree cut down. Daniel said, 'You shall eat grass like an ox.' Afterwards my kingdom was restored."

2Ki24: The LORD sent raiders against Judah. Jehoiachin ruled and Nebuchadnezzar took all Jerusalem captive. Zedekiah ruled and did evil.

Jer52: Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem. Nebuzaradan burned the temple and took the people into exile. Evil Merodach released Jehoiachin.

Jer27: The LORD said: Put a yoke on your neck. I will hand all the nations over to serve Nebuchadnezzar. Do not listen to your prophets.

Jer48: Of Moab: Woe to Nebo, for it is laid waste. We have heard of his arrogance. How it is broken! Moab has become a derision to all.

Jer49: The LORD says: Rabbah will become desolate. I will make Edom small. Damascus has become feeble. Flee, O Hazor. I will destroy Elam.

Jer25: You did not listen, says the LORD. So I will summon Babylon. Make the nations drink my cup of wrath. The LORD will roar from on high.

Jer27: The LORD said: Put a yoke on your neck. I will hand all the nations over to serve Nebuchadnezzar. Do not listen to your prophets.

Jer28: Hananiah took Jeremiah's yoke and broke it. The LORD said: Tell Hananiah, I have put an iron yoke on these nations. Hananiah died.

Jer29: Jeremiah wrote to the exiles: Seek peace for the city. After seventy years you will return. Ahab, Zedekiah and Shemaiah speak lies.

Chapter Summaries (from @biblesummary)

Jer50: Of Babylon: A nation will make her desolate. Judah will seek the LORD. Repay Babylon for all her deeds. A sword against her warriors!

Jer51: The LORD says: I will send a destroyer against Babylon. I will repay them for the evil done in Zion. Read these words in Babylon.

2Ch36: Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah ruled. Then Nebuchadnezzar burned the temple and took Judah captive for seventy years.

Eze1: I saw visions of God. Out of a storm came four creatures. I saw wheels within wheels. Above them was a throne and the figure of a man.

Eze2: He said to me: "Son of man, stand up." The Spirit entered me. He said: "I send you to rebel Israel." Before me was a scroll of woe.

Eze3: He said to me: "Israel will not listen." I came to the exiles. The LORD said: "I have made you a watchman. I will open your mouth."

2Kgs24: The LORD sent raiders against Judah. Jehoiachin ruled and Nebuchadnezzar took all Jerusalem captive. Zedekiah ruled and did evil.

Jer52: Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem. Nebuzaradan burned the temple and took the people into exile. Evil Merodach released Jehoiachin.

Teachings About God

- Daniel describes the glory of God and his wonders and the eternal nature of his kingdom.
- Ezekiel received a vision of God that revealed God's glory. God is sovereign over his people.
- The Book of Ezekiel only makes sense in the context of God's covenant with his people and his great redemptive purpose.
- God shows great concern for his name in the Book of Ezekiel. He wants his people to know the He is Lord.
- Jeremiah understood God's sovereignty in determining the rise and fall of earthly nations.

Teachings About Humanity

- God's sovereignty in individual lives is seen in the personal history of Daniel.
- Ezekiel shows that God responds to individuals based on their relationship to him.
- Jeremiah predicts the fall of Babylon.
- The consequences of rebelling against God cannot be postponed indefinitely.
- Jeremiah shows the importance of individuals coming to terms with their personal significance.

Teachings About Salvation

- Redemption will happen only after judgement [JER 29]. The longest quoted text in the New Testament (HEB 8:8-12) looked forward to what Christ would accomplish by his coming and death.

Reflections of Christ/Holy Spirit

- Daniel was recognized as having "a spirit of the holy gods, but this falls short of a clear reference to the Holy Spirit.
- The expression Son of Man in Ezekiel is the expression Jesus uses most frequently to refer to himself.
- Jeremiah's sufferings anticipate the sufferings of Jesus.

Literary Genres/Techniques

- Daniel includes visions and interpretations, written partly in Hebrew and partly Aramaic. He predicts both near and remote events.
- The prophecies of the 4 world kingdoms (DA 2;7) is the most extensive "philosophy of history" in the Old Testament.
- Ezekiel includes prophecies, visions and symbolic actions. It is written mainly in Hebrew prose but has some poetry. His visions are a special form of prophecy.
- This reading of Jeremiah is Hebrew prose.

Author/Date of Writing/Audience

- Daniel prophesied during the reigns of the Babylonian kings and one Persian king (c605-530 BC) to those in exile.
- Jeremiah prophesied to Judah for 40 years c 626-c586. The book was likely compiled c585 BC. Jeremiah was written for the people of Judah during Jeremiah's lifetime.
- 2 Chronicles was likely written by Ezra c450 BC to the Jews in Jerusalem after they returned from exile.
- Ezekiel prophesied during the first part of the Babylonian captivity (c593-571BC).

What did I learn about God?

- The expression “not by human hands” in Daniel 2:34 means without human power, something only God can do. What are some things only God can do?
- When we aren’t listening to God, what does He do to get our attention? Discuss how His methods vary with different people and at different times with the same people. What can we do to hear Him sooner rather than later?
- What keeps God working with the Judean people even though they just won’t listen? What is God’s greater creative plan underlying the Babylonian invasion and the destruction of Jerusalem?
- Why does God condemn pride and arrogance so severely? What is evil about them? (JER 48)

What did I learn about human nature?

- Do you think dreams can really have deep meanings like Nebuchadnezzar’s? How is Daniel similar to Joseph as a dream-interpreter? How are the dreams Daniel interprets for Nebuchadnezzar, and the way he interprets them, different from those Joseph interprets for the Pharaoh (GE 41)?
- What is the significance of Jehoiachin eating at the king’s table (JER 52:33)? What does this say about how God rewards faithful people, even those who wait years for answered prayer?
- In Jeremiah’s prophecies to the nations he warns against trusting in their riches. How much are riches and prosperity the basis of military strength today?
- God promises to protect the lives of orphans and widows (JER 49:11). Why are they exempt from God’s wrath? Who are the orphans and widows in our world that God would be merciful toward?

What did I learn about my life/relationship with God?

- It is not unusual to feel like we are at the mercy of the people and circumstances around us. How should a knowledge of God’s wisdom, sovereignty and power affect our view of the people and circumstances in our lives?
- We don’t have people in power that insist that we bow down to a golden image in worship, but what are some of the issues we face today that may challenge our faith?
- Times of adversity can be times of opportunity. When we stay true to our faith in extreme trials, we affect those around you. In the case of Daniel’s three friends, Nebuchadnezzar was so astonished at their faith and how God responded that he publicly admitted to God’s greatness (Dan 3:28-29). Discuss how our demonstration of faith affects our family, our friends, our coworkers, and others who see how we behave.
- Does life seem unfair or unpredictable or do you sense a basic fairness in life (what goes around comes around)? If God did to you as you have done to others, what would be your fate?