

Week Thirty-Five

Days 239–245



THE BIBLE IN A YEAR

WITH FR. MIKE SCHMITZ

Exile Narrative: Jeremiah 22–31 | Supplemental: Daniel 3–14; Proverbs 15:29–16:24

UNSTABLE TIMES REQUIRE FAITHFULNESS TO GOD



Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael
in the Fiery Furnace

God vows to make a new covenant with Israel, a law that will be internalized by the people in the way the covenant with Abraham's children was not (see Jeremiah 31). Jeremiah's prophecies of punishment are balanced with Daniel's stories of faithfulness. But remember, punishment is the prelude to restoration, not its opposite.

- The final wave of deportations to Babylon takes place under Zedekiah (see Jeremiah 24).
- When Nebuchadnezzar comes to Jerusalem, he kills Zedekiah's sons in front of him and then gouges out Zedekiah's eyes before sending him into exile (see 2 Kings 25:7).
- The prophet Jeremiah's letters to the people in Babylon tell them how to live in exile. He says they will be there for seventy years and should build lives but also remember they will return home (see Jeremiah 29).
- In the next chapter, God commands Jeremiah to write about a time when the people of Israel will return from exile to their homeland.
- The book of Daniel contains familiar stories and recounts revelations. Daniel and Jeremiah are contemporaries.
- In Babylon, Daniel, Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael are trained for three years in the king's house. They refuse to eat from King Nebuchadnezzar's table but instead eat only food permissible according to the Law. The Lord blesses them for being faithful.
- Their names are changed to refer to false gods of Babylon, but they refuse to behave like the Babylonians.
- In this book, Daniel's three companions are thrown into a fiery furnace for not bowing down to King Nebuchadnezzar's golden statue. The Lord saves them, and Nebuchadnezzar makes a law forbidding anyone to blaspheme their God.
- Daniel's conduct is a model for Israel for how they should live in exile. Even if it costs them everything, they must remain faithful to the worship of the one true God.
- Though we live in unstable times today, we know that God, the Ancient of Days, conquers all—and has invited us to be part of his kingdom.

Dive Deeper

As a child, you may have heard about Daniel in the lions' den (see Daniel 6). What does that story mean and why is it in Scripture? Have you ever felt as if you were in a den of lions? What did you do in response?

Bible Answers

Who are the satraps mentioned in the book of Daniel?

In the book of Daniel, we see mention of satraps. In the Babylonian empire, there were several classes of officials who helped the king rule. Satraps were among these, serving in a powerful position as a governor, maintaining order within the empire. The book also mentions justices and treasurers, among others (see Daniel 3:2).

As we see in Daniel 3, the three young Jewish officials of the king named Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego would not worship the king's idol of gold along with the other officials, and so they were cast into the fiery furnace.



DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN

This seventeenth-century oil painting by Peter Paul Rubens depicts Daniel in the lions' den (Daniel 14).

This story has long captivated the minds of readers of the Bible.



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