

God  
is in  
Control



Daniel 1:1-6

# “Alternative Histories”

- “What if LKY did not become the first PM of Singapore but the Communist Party had won the Elections in 1959?”
- And what if we have grown up in a repressive police state, living in constant fear of the authorities?

# The Experience of Exile

- Can you imagine what must have been like to be exiled from home to a foreign city, to be alone and scared, a long way from familiar surroundings?
- How would you cope in such a hostile setting?
- What truths could you cling to?

# The Experience of Exile

- Even though our experience of the hostility of the world is certainly not normally as extreme as that of some countries that are opposed to Christianity, it nonetheless remains true for all of us that we are exiles here on earth.
- We are “strangers & pilgrims on earth” (1 Pet. 2:11).

# The Experience of Exile

- The Book of Daniel was written to God's people, Israel, when they were experiencing the brokenness and pain of life in exile, far away from home.
- It was designed to encourage them in their walk with God who was with them in the midst of their alienation and pain.

# I. God's Faithfulness in Judgment

- The first aspect of God's faithfulness that we see in this chapter is God's faithfulness in judgment.
- Judah's exile from the land in Daniel's time was not merely an accident of fate or the tragic result of the expansionist policies of imperial Babylon in the late seventh century B.C.

# I. God's Faithfulness in Judgment

- As Daniel 1:2 makes clear, the exile came upon Judah because the Lord handed King Jehoiakim over to the power of Nebuchadnezzar. God gave His people into the hand of their enemies.

# I. God's Faithfulness in Judgment

- The Lord had warned Israel of the sure consequences of their sins in the Book of Leviticus (ch.26).
- Because of their persistent disobedience and rebellion against God over many generations, the Lord finally handed the over into the power of their enemies, and so they went into exile (605, 597, 586 B.C.)



# I. God's Faithfulness in Judgment

- Yet the fate of Daniel and his friends in being dragged off into exile was not merely a fulfillment of the general covenantal course of Lev. 26.
- It was also the specific fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah in 2 Kings 20:18.

# I. God's Faithfulness in Judgment

- Why was the Lord so upset with Hezekiah?
- What was the problem with giving the envoys from Babylon a royal tour of the palace?

# I. God's Faithfulness in Judgment

- In spite of the Lord's miraculous deliverance of Jerusalem from the surrounding armies of Sennacherib and the Assyrians in 2 Kings 19, Hezekiah was now looking to political means for solving the Assyrian problem, through alliances with Babylon.
- Politics had replaced trust in the Lord.

# Application

- Modern people too may be tempted to place their hopes in political alliances rather than wholeheartedly trusting in the Lord.
- Alternatively, we may invest our career hopes in adopting the world's methods of getting ahead, only to discover much later the cost of these methods to our homes and families.

# I. God's Faithfulness in Judgment

- Isaiah's word of judgment on Hezekiah's strategy was specific and severe.
- Because Hezekiah sought to preserve his treasures by trusting in Babylon, the Babylonians would come and carry off everything in his palace (20:17).

# I. God's Faithfulness in Judgment

- Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem and carried off treasures from the temple of God to put in the house of his own god (Dan.1:2), and he took some of the royal family and nobility—descendants of Hezekiah—and put them under the charge of Ashpenaz, the chief of his court officials (Dan.1:4).

# I. God's Faithfulness in Judgment

- God's judgment upon the line of Hezekiah had been faithfully carried through, just as Isaiah had said.

## II. Hope in Judgment

- Yet the recognition that their fate came from the hand of God as a faithful act of judgment was itself an encouragement to the exiles.
- Their future was not controlled by Babylon or its gods, but by the Lord, the God of heaven (Dan.2:19).



## II. Hope in Judgment

- The One who sent them into exile had also promised to be with them there, and ultimately to restore them from exile after a time of judgment (70 years).
- God will not abandon what is His own.

# Implication

- During its hardest moments, life often seems out of control.
- Our fate may sometimes seem to lie in the hands of hostile people, or in the outworking of impersonal forces of one kind or another.

# Implication

- Yet the reality is that our every experience in this world (from the apparently coincidental at one end of the spectrum, to the determined acts of wicked men and women on the other) lies under the control of our sovereign God!

# Implication

- Everything we experience in life, no matter how difficult or apparently meaningless it may seem, is God's purpose for us.
- For believers in Christ, each circumstance is the Lord's means of furthering His sanctifying goals.

# Implication

- He has not abandoned or forgotten us.
- On the contrary, He will walk through these trials and preserve us through them by His grace.

# Conclusion

- This OT Book (Daniel) proves that “there is a God in heaven” (2:28) and that “the Most High rules in the kingdom of men” (4:25).
- Daniel makes it clear that God Almighty is sovereign in the affairs of this world: “History is His story.”

# God is in Control



He's got the whole world in His Hand!

# Personalize the Truth

- The book of Daniel reassures us that God is in control.
- Do you usually think of God in terms of His personal involvement in your life or in terms of His role as Lord of the Universe?



# Personalize the Truth

- How can knowing that God is in control in both your personal circumstances and the unfolding of the cosmos give you more confidence, courage, and peace?