

Some of the Vessels of the House of God

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[0:00] 2 Chronicles 36, starting at verse 1. And the king of Egypt made his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem, and changed his name to Jehoiakim.

But Necho took Jehoiahaz, his brother, and carried him to Egypt. Jehoiakim was 25 years old when he began to reign, and he reigned 11 years in Jerusalem.

He did what was evil in the sight of the Lord his God. Against him came up Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and bound him in chains to take him to Babylon.

Nebuchadnezzar also carried part of the vessels of the house of the Lord to Babylon and put them in his palace in Babylon. You can go ahead and turn over in your Bibles to Daniel chapter 1.

We are beginning tonight a sermon series in the book of Daniel. And we did just here read for us the historical backdrop to the book. Because we are not in 1st century Corinth anymore.

[1:39] This is now early 7th century BC. The year is 605 BC to be more precise. And so if we think about the history of Israel, Israel has been a divided kingdom for over 200 years now.

The northern kingdom has already been conquered and its people living in exile for over 100 years. The southern kingdom is now moving in that same direction.

But its conquest will not be as rapid as the northern kingdom. The conquest of Judah will actually take place in three stages. Now Nebuchadnezzar and his Babylonian army, they will come on the scene.

We just read of how the king of Egypt came against Judah. And how he had in a sense conquered Judah and forced them to pay tribute to him. Well Babylon is going to defeat Egypt.

And now they have their eyes set upon Judah. So his armies will come. And they will come to Jerusalem. And they will subdue it in this three-stage, very methodical fashion.

[2:47] Defeating one king after another that rebels against Nebuchadnezzar. And then eventually they will destroy the city. And the temple of God there in Jerusalem.

So what we just read in 2nd Chronicles 36 takes place during the first stage of those three stages of conquest. And most importantly for our purposes tonight, what we just read parallels what is described for us in the opening verses of Daniel.

And so listen to just the first two verses here in Daniel chapter 1. In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim, king of Judah, into his hand with some of the vessels of the house of God. And he brought them to the land of Shinar, to the house of his God, and placed the vessels in the treasury of his God.

So Daniel here is relaying to us the same events that were just described in 2nd Chronicles 36. This is that first stage of the conquest of Judah with the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar coming.

[3:59] And he is forcing king Jehoiakim into submission. So Daniel begins his book with historical context. He gives us the setting.

Now this is a very purposeful move on Daniel's part. Not just in giving us the setting of the book, but giving us these very particular details in the setting of the book.

Look again here at verses 1 to 2. Daniel describes the defeat of Jerusalem at the hands of Nebuchadnezzar. And as Daniel relays to us this defeat, he focuses in on this very particular detail. The desecration of the temple. The carrying off of the vessels found in the temple. And how Nebuchadnezzar brings them to the land of Shinar. That's the kingdom of Babylonia, with Babylon as its capital.

And those vessels, where did they go? They were put into the house of Nebuchadnezzar's God. That's what Daniel shares for us right up front here. Which is very interesting.

[5:02] And it is very purposeful. Though it's perhaps not what we might expect. Especially not from a prophet. Did you know that every other prophetic book in the Old Testament begins with an introduction of the prophet himself?

Something to the effect of, this is the vision of Isaiah. Or these are the words of Jeremiah. But not so in the book of Daniel. Daniel, who himself writes this book, doesn't introduce us to himself.

He actually keeps himself pretty well in the background. We don't even learn of him until verse 6.

Instead of introducing us to himself, Daniel gives us the setting.

He tells us the events that are surrounding the writing of this prophetic book. But even the specific details of those events, those details are a bit unexpected. What we might expect first is perhaps a description of who is carried off into exile.

And that comes to us in verse 3. But the opening words in verses 1 to 2 are not a description of who gets carried off, but of what gets carried off.

[6:14] Inanimate objects. Vessels from the temple. Now maybe we hear that, and we don't find that to be a striking revelation. They may seem more like a strange detail.

Perhaps even an unnecessary detail. Why draw our attention to pots and pans? To a lampstand? To a table? To a wooden box? None of that seems all that significant when Daniel, along with so many of God's people, are being carried off into exile.

But you see, Daniel here places the emphasis on these vessels because he's helping us to see that God himself is being challenged.

Here is Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon. And what is he raiding? The house of God. For those of us who have had homes burglarized, we know that that is a very personal offense.

Entering into your home like that. Brazenly wronging you in such an intimate way. There's a feeling of being violated. This deep disrespect when one enters into your house and steals from you.

[7:26] Well, that is what Nebuchadnezzar has done in the house of God. The place where God's presence had come to dwell in a special way. It is a holy place where God's own people, God's own priests, they had to exercise great caution when coming into God's house.

They had to follow God's rules for how to enter into his home, the place of his dwelling here on earth. They had to follow his rules to enter near in worship.

And here was Nebuchadnezzar ignoring those rules. And he was not coming to worship, but to plunder. Waltzing into God's house to steal from him.

And what did Nebuchadnezzar do after desecrating God's holy house? Well, he took those vessels for worship and he put them in the temple of his own God.

That's what verse 2 tells us. And Nebuchadnezzar here is, he's showboating. He's mocking God openly. Nebuchadnezzar is taking what he considers to be his trophies.

[8:33] And he is going to put them on display in his own temple for his own God. Now, this is likely the temple of Marduk. The chief God, false God of the Babylonians.

And so this is all a challenge. This is a competition of sorts. Whose God is God? And Nebuchadnezzar is saying, my God is.

Obviously. I've defeated your God, Judah. My God is stronger. My God is more powerful. My God has conquered your God. I'll take the things that you use to worship your God and I'll use them to worship mine.

My God is better than yours. And Nebuchadnezzar is saying, there's nothing that you can do about it, Judah. So you see, Daniel is very purposeful in beginning his book this way.

Because this is not simply a book about a people sent into exile. This is not simply a book about a man named Daniel. This is a book about the God that Daniel worships.

[9:39] About the God that Daniel serves. Whose God is God? Is Nebuchadnezzar's God the one true God? Or is Israel's and Judah's God the one true God?

That's the question that really runs through the whole of the book of Daniel. Whose God is God? Well, here in the opening verses of chapter 1, the situation seems pretty bleak.

God appears defeated. God appears conquered, put to shame as the temple of Marduk gains trophies to put on display. Oh, but things are not as they appear.

And in fact, in this bleak situation, the brilliance of God's character shines through. And what we see tonight are three attributes of God that themselves are put on display for us in these verses in Daniel.

And these attributes show us that, no, indeed, the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, He is the one true living God. So let's consider the first attribute together.

[10:49] The faithfulness of God. The faithfulness of God to keep His promises. And we see this attribute shine forth in these first two verses of this opening chapter of Daniel.

Because what is happening here, as Judah goes into exile, this is showing us the faithfulness of God to keep His promises, even promises of judgment.

You see, all the way back in Deuteronomy, God made it very clear to Israel, He was explicit that before they entered into the promised land, their enjoyment of the land was contingent on their obedience to His law.

You want to live in the law? I mean, you want to live in the land? You must live according to the law. Disobey God's laws, and you will be displaced from God's land.

And in Deuteronomy, God declared with certainty, through the mouth of Moses, that this would happen. Now listen to what He said. He said, The Lord will bring a nation against you from far away, from the end of the earth, swooping down like the eagle, a nation whose language you do not understand, a hard-faced nation who shall not respect the old or show mercy to the young.

[12:07] And then a little later in this speech, He said, And the Lord will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other. And there you shall serve other gods of wood and stone, which neither you nor your fathers have known.

And among these nations you shall find no respite, and there shall be no resting place for the sole of your foot. But the Lord will give you there a trembling heart and failing eyes and a languishing soul.

Failure to obey God's laws would result in that. The sin of the people would bring the judgment of the Lord.

And that is exactly what we're seeing happening here in Daniel chapter 1. These opening words of Daniel remind us, yes, God is faithful to His word.

What He says will happen does in fact happen. What He says that He will do, He does in fact do. God is never unsure of Himself.

[13:11] He doesn't give us empty threats or say things that He can't follow through on. We can trust what He says. We can trust what He says, whether it's for blessing or for judgment.

He is true to His word. And so this should not be a surprising revelation to us as we open the book of Daniel and we find that Judah has found itself sent into exile.

Oh, this was the warning that God had given through His prophets for so many years. Turn from your sin with a contrite, humble heart, or I will bring judgment down upon you.

Well, God was so very patient, but His patience had come to an end. And with Nebuchadnezzar, God brought judgment to Judah for the sins of His people.

That is the faithfulness of God put on display. What He says He will do is just what He does. So there's no mystery about it. There's no uncertainty.

[14:12] And Daniel 1 opens with the reminder that, yes, God is faithful to His promises and promises even of judgment. God is still faithful to those promises today.

Judgment will come one day for all of God's enemies, for all of those who continue in their sin, who love their sin, who refuse to turn from their sin and to put their trust in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of their sins.

The judgment of exile that fell on the people of Judah only points forward to the greater judgment of an eternity in hell one day.

God will show Himself faithful, even faithful to judge. If you are not trusting in Christ today as your Lord and Savior, do you see how patient God is toward you?

Not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. You can be sure of this, though. There is a coming day when that patience will come to an end, just as it did for Judah.

[15:20] You can be sure of it. And the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly, as 2 Peter 3 says, that day will be upon you. So turn to Christ today.

Cry out to Him for mercy, and you will find the God who is faithful to His promises of judgment is also so wonderfully faithful to His promises of blessing for those who turn to Christ.

He's faithful to forgive. All who turn to Him are forgiven. Not one is turned away. So we see the faithfulness of God shine through, even in these opening verses of Daniel.

Well, let's consider now the second attribute of God in our passage, the sovereignty of God in the trials of His people. There's this little phrase here in verse 2, a phrase that we could very easily overlook.

Look at how verse 2 says, And the Lord gave Jehoiakim, king of Judah, into His hand. All that happened in Judah, the invading army that came into the land, the besieging of Jerusalem, the fall of the city, the capture of the king, the carrying off of the vessels from the temple, that was all according to the sovereign plan of God.

[16 : 42] Jehoiakim wasn't ripped out of God's hand as he was ripped from the throne. He was given by God into Nebuchadnezzar's hand.

He was delivered up by God to the Babylonian king. Now we are going to see the sovereignty of God all through the book of Daniel.

We'll see his sovereignty repeatedly put forward for us. But we see even in chapter 1, in this repeated phrase, he gave, showing us the sovereignty of God.

Look down at verse 9. And God gave Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the chief of the eunuchs. Then down in verse 17.

As for these four youths, God gave them learning and skill in all literature and wisdom, and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.

[17 : 41] So you see, Daniel is very careful to drive home to us in chapter 1. All of these historical events that we're reading about, they are happening not apart from God's will, but according to God's will.

Think back, even remember the reading from 2 Chronicles 36. That historical narrative. It's detailing the decline and eventual fall of Judah. It says the same thing in verse 17.

2 Chronicles 36 gives us this sneak peek behind the curtain of history showing us how God is sovereignly orchestrating all that's happening. So verse 17 says in 2 Chronicles 36, Therefore He, that is God, therefore He brought up against them the King of the Chaldeans, that's the Babylonians, who killed their young men by the sword in the house of their sanctuary and had no compassion on young men or virgin, old men or aged.

He gave them all into His hand. He gave them all into His hand. The sovereignty of God on full display in the trials of Judah.

We could read Daniel chapter 1 and we could mistakenly only read it through the lens of human history. Here's a nation.

[19 : 01] It's more powerful than this other nation. So it does what powerful nations have done all through history. It conquers those people. It carries them off into exile. It takes the vessels of their religious temple.

Oh, but here in verse 2 we're reminded, no, this is the Lord's doing. His hand is behind all of this. His hand gave Jehoiakim into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.

And let's not miss this either. Nebuchadnezzar has no clue. He has no idea that God is behind all of this.

Nebuchadnezzar thinks, this is my doing. This is my glorious conquest. Nebuchadnezzar may pay lip service to his Babylonian false gods.

But who does he really think is worthy of worship? Himself. He will make that image of gold that Daniel's friends refuse to bow down to.

[19 : 58] Who is that an image of? Marduk? No. Himself. It's not a pagan god that he makes this huge image of. It's himself. And when Nebuchadnezzar is later walking on the roof of his palace and he's overlooking the city of Babylon in all of its grandeur, who does Nebuchadnezzar give credit to for making this city so great?

Himself. Is not this great Babylon for which I have built by my mighty power as a royal residence and for the glory of my majesty?

Nebuchadnezzar may worship false gods, but he's not even devout in his worship of them. He worships himself. And so when God gave King Jehoiakim into his hands, who do you think Nebuchadnezzar gave credit to?

And Nebuchadnezzar was blind to reality. He was blinded by his pride. He was blinded by his vain lust for glory. Nebuchadnezzar saw nothing of God's work and only his own work.

He thought, I have conquered this people. And in reality, God had given them into his hand. Now, in all of this, we have quite a contrast. Because unlike Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel saw the sovereignty of

God.

[21:21] He recognized God's hand in all of this, even in exile. As he would later say of God in chapter 2, verse 21, he changes times and seasons.

He removes kings and sets them up. So here is Daniel in exile, and he's saying he removes kings. He could easily remove Nebuchadnezzar if he chose.

He could set up a new king. Daniel recognized that in his trial, God was sovereignly at work. So Daniel could suffer, but he could see, no, this is not without purpose.

And the same is true for us in all of our trials. Our God is working according to his perfect plan. We may not understand it.

We certainly may not see the end from the beginning, but our God does. And what's more than that? He doesn't just see the end from the beginning. What does he say? I declare it.

[22:19] God declares the end from the beginning. And he is working to accomplish his purposes for his glory and for the good of his people. And so we can do what Daniel does in chapter 2.

We can trust him and we can bless him. That's what Daniel did. As Daniel said that God changes times and seasons. As Daniel said that God removes kings and sets up kings.

Daniel also says, blessed be the name of God forever and ever to whom belong wisdom and might. And those words bring us very naturally then to the third and the final attribute of God that brilliantly shines through this bleak situation.

And that is his wisdom. His wisdom in where he places his people. So let's read now verses 3 to 7 in Daniel chapter 1.

Then the king commanded Ashpenaz, his chief eunuch, to bring some of the people of Israel, both of the royal family and of the nobility, youths without blemish, of good appearance and skillful in all wisdom, endowed with knowledge, understanding, learning, and competent to stand in the king's palace and to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans.

[23:44] The king assigned them a daily portion of the food that the king ate and of the wine that he drank. They were to be educated for three years and at the end of that time they were to stand before the king.

Among these were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishaël, and Azariah of the tribe of Judah. And the chief of the eunuchs gave them names. Daniel he called Belteshazzar, Hananiah he called Shadrach, Mishaël he called Meshach, and Azariah he called Abinadab.

The Babylonians were very shrewd and strategic in what they were doing. There was this method to their madness when it came to how they treated a conquered nation.

And what they were doing wasn't reinventing the wheel here. They were doing what many nations would do. They brought the very best and the very brightest. They brought them back to the city of Babylon to assimilate them into Babylonian culture.

Or you could say to indoctrinate them into Babylonian culture. They were trying to remove all vestiges of the Israelites' They wanted to make them Babylonian through and through.

[25:03] And they picked the best and the brightest for a reason. Well here are their future leaders. Indoctrinate them and the rest of the nation will fall right in line as well.

So they took these future leaders and they educated them intensely for three years. And this was no crash course in Babylonian culture and philosophy and history and theology.

No, this was a three year intensive study working so hard to replace what the Israelites had learned of God and His ways with their pagan practices and beliefs.

Because while much of the nation of Israel had indeed gone astray, much of the nation had rebelled against God, it's why Daniel and his friends found themselves in the situation that they're in, there was clearly though still a remnant of faithful people of God.

Daniel and his friends, they're an example to us of that. There was this obedient remnant and as we'll see in the book of Daniel, it's clear that this remnant, they were brought up to fear the Lord.

[26:10] They were brought up to obey Him and to walk in His ways. We see this with Daniel. We see it with his friends. Their allegiance is to God alone.

They held fast to that central declaration of their faith from Deuteronomy 6.4. Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. I'm sorry, with all your might. That was their faith in a nutshell. They were to know God.

They were to love God. They were to walk in His ways. They were to obey His commandments. For these faithful Israelites, their parents would have taught them diligently as Deuteronomy says. They would have talked of God's commands when they sat in their house, when they walked in the way, when they laid down, and when they rose. And in all of this, these young Israelites would have been continually reminded by their parents of what God had done for them.

[27 : 13] Oh, in that great act of salvation so many centuries ago when God brought their ancestors out of Egypt and delivered them through the Red Sea and brought them into the promised land. Those mighty acts of God, those wonderful works of God, they would have been drilled into their heads and drilled into their hearts.

So even in the opening verses here, we're reminded of the important role of parents in the lives of their children. Daniel and his friends were ripped from their homeland, they were ripped from their families, but their faith clearly went with them.

That's a lesson for us, parents, raising our children. Now, Lord willing, our children won't be put in this position in such dire straits, but we still have a crucial job as they are living under our roof to teach them God's Word, to help them that they might hide it in their hearts, to point them to the Savior, to exhort them to turn to Him in faith, to pray that God would do that wonderful work of salvation in their hearts.

We have this solemn responsibility to raise up our children in the fear, in the discipline, in the instruction of the Lord. Because one day, they will be in the world, and we want them to be equipped to stand firm like Daniel and his friends, not persuaded by the enticements of the world, but simply continuing to cling to Christ.

So here we see Babylon. Babylon trying to persuade. Babylon trying so very hard to turn the hearts of the Israelite youth. And again, this demographic, very intentionally selected here.

[29 : 00] Take them away from their parents. Take them away from their influence while they're still young and impressionable and completely isolate them for three years. Forget about your home.

Forget about your heritage. Forget about your God. Here's a new and better home with a new and better heritage and new and better gods.

That was drilled into them day in and day out for over a thousand days. And then at the end of that time, what were these young Israelites to do?

Well, they were to come and stand before the king. They were to be presented to the king as more trophies. Trophies of his conquest. Now, proudly championing the cause of Babylon and having as this distant memory at best their allegiance and their affection for their home and their heritage and most importantly their God.

They wanted the Israelite youth to forget everything about themselves. Even the food they ate was different and it came to them from the king. This was like a subtle but daily reminder to them that their physical sustenance was provided to them by their new king.

[30 : 16] Oh, your daily bread? That comes to you from Babylon. And it wasn't just the food that they ate that changed. But even their names too. They were given these new names in this just continuing effort to obliterate their Hebrew identity because their Hebrew names those tied back to their Hebrew God.

Daniel means God is my judge. Hananiah means Yahweh is gracious. Mishael means who is what God is.

And Azariah means Yahweh is a helper. Well, those names certainly wouldn't do in Babylon. They couldn't have these Israelite youth calling each other by name and being reminded of their God each time that they did that.

That would be undoing all of their hard work to indoctrinate them. So they gave them new names that would have made them say the names of Babylonian false gods rather than the name of the one true living God.

Daniel then became Belteshazzar. And that's a reference to the wife of the false god Bel. And that name means O lady meaning like O Bel protect the king.

[31 : 33] Hananiah became Shadrach meaning command of Aku that is the god of the moon. Azariah became Abednego meaning servant of the shining one.

And that is a reference to the false god Nebo. And Mishael became Meshach. And this is perhaps the most pointed change. From a name rooted in the question who is what God is to a name rooted in the question who is like Aku.

So the Babylonians went to great lengths. Their hoped for goal was that the Israelites would do nothing like Dorothy from the Wizard of Oz. That the last thing they'd think to say would be there's no place like home.

Rather they would look around and they would say this is home. This is our only home. The Babylonians thought they had this plan. This wise strategy.

But their wisdom was no match for the wisdom of God. Because God very purposefully placed this faithful remnant of his people behind enemy lines.

[32 : 44] And as verse 9 tells us which we will get to in weeks to come Daniel was filled with resolve. And so were his friends. A resolve to remain faithful.

A resolve to remain obedient. To maintain their allegiance to the one true God. So this may have been an attempt by the enemy to brainwash God's people.

But it was an attempt that would fail in spectacular fashion. Instead of winning the Israelites over to their false gods, the Israelites would now serve as a witness to the Babylonians of the one true God.

Time and again we're going to see this play out in the book of Daniel. Now very surely as expected we will hear public praise for God on the lips of Israelite captives.

But we will also hear public praise for God on the lips of Babylonian kings. Who is what God is? Or as Daniel will soon say in chapter 2, blessed be the name of God forever and ever to whom belong wisdom and might.

[33 : 56] So a quick reading of Daniel chapter 1 that might lead some to think this is such a bleak situation. Oh but we see the brilliance of God's wisdom shines through.

His perfect plans being unwittingly carried out by a people of strange lips and with a foreign tongue to use the words of Isaiah 28.

The Babylonians carried off God's people into exile but in so doing they only served to extend God's presence among the nations.

Now the Babylonian Gentile kings will hear with their very own ears of this one true God and now these Gentile kings will witness with their own eyes his wonderful works and they will proclaim with their very own lips he is the living God enduring forever his kingdom shall never be destroyed.

Do you see the wisdom of God in the lives of Daniel and his friends strategically placing them in these positions at this very time and in this very land?

[35 : 10] There's many individuals this could remind us of even in the Old Testament. How about Joseph in Genesis as he rose to power in Egypt? How about Esther in the book of Esther as she too was in Persia?

God does this with his people and he does it to extend the fame of his name. Where has God strategically placed you?

Have you considered that every detail of your life has been wisely determined by your God? The street that you live on, the neighbors you live near, the job that you hold, the co-workers you interact with, the extended family you have, perhaps unbelievers in your midst at a family gathering, our location, our situation, it's all so very purposeful, down to the smallest interaction with a stranger in the store or in the gym or at the park that God in his wisdom has strategically embedded you behind enemy lines in this world that you might be a witness for him.

Think about those who were a witness to you. Think of the Christians that God wisely and strategically placed in your life that you would hear of him. And maybe from a human perspective very unexpectedly these people were placed in your life.

No one could have anticipated that you would hear of Christ from that person in that place at that time. No one but God of course. It was his doing.

[36 : 50] Well now you too get to be his mouthpiece to others. Telling them of Christ. Telling them of his salvation. What wisdom of God put on display.

Well tonight we've looked at the opening verses of Daniel. The stage has been set for the book. And what a great reversal we've seen. Things look bad.

It's a grim outlook for Daniel and his friends. A foreign nation has conquered God's people. And what's more they've ransacked the temple of God. They've taken its vessels away. And the question must be asked whose God is God?

God. But all this is simply the stage upon which God's character is put on display. The spotlight shining brightly upon him and his name and his fame will be extended to the nations.

What Babylon meant for evil. God meant for good. Here we see his faithfulness in keeping his promises. Here we see his sovereignty in the trials of his people.

[37:52] And here we see his wisdom in where he places his people. The faithful remnant of God's people like Daniel and his friends they may have been very far from home but God was indeed so very near to them in this foreign land.

And his character it was so clearly on display for those who had eyes to see and who had ears to hear. Well these opening verses of Daniel should serve to remind us that the one true God of Israel the living God he is still very much at work in our midst today.

Even as we live as sojourners and exiles waiting for the heavenly city that we look forward to. Waiting for the city that we seek which is to come.

The Lord remains faithful in keeping his promises. The Lord remains sovereign in all of our trials.

The Lord remains wise in the very places that he's put us.

And so that should fill us with resolve like Daniel. That should strengthen us as we live in this world that we might not be of this world but of the kingdom that is to come.

[39:07] So you are not alone Christian. However bleak the situation may be however bad things may appear your God goes with you your God goes before you he's faithful he's sovereign he's wise and he's working all things for good for those who love him.

So I know that we're not in Corinth anymore but if I could draw your attention back to 1 Corinthians for a moment if God is for you if God is with you if God is at work in the darkest of circumstances and we see his attributes put on display what are we to do?

Be watchful stand firm in the faith act like men and strong women and be strong the question it has been asked whose God is God and it's going to be abundantly clear as we continue through this book as we've seen tonight the God of Israel the God of Daniel he is the living God enduring forever and for us who are in Christ the God of Daniel is our God too he is for us and so may we resolutely live for him let's pray together father we do thank you that you've given us your word to encourage us to embolden us to remind us that though this world may renounce you though this world may say there is no God we are reminded that in the bleakest of circumstances you and your attributes shine through so brilliantly we thank you for

Daniel we thank you for the setting of Daniel we pray as we go from here that we would live as your people in this world that we would be telling others of Christ with great boldness and conviction and joy that we would live as those who declare that you are God that you are wise that you are sovereign that you are faithful to your promises so we thank you for your word we pray that you would strengthen us now as we go into this week we pray all of this in Christ's name amen Thank you.