

The Book of Daniel: Bible Study 2020

# Introduction and Chapter One



# Main Themes

- A political book
- God's sovereignty over earthly rulers and kingdoms
- How does God continue to work his plans when all seems lost?
- How can God's people remain pure?
- God the giver
  - gives Judah into the hands of Babylon
  - gives dreams and interpretation
  - gives the young men gifts

# Babylon: Land of Exile

- Fall of Jerusalem in reign of Jehoiachim
- Nebuchadnezzar II ruler of Babylon
- Exile 587/586 BC



# Babylon: Land of Exile

- 2 Kings 25
  - <sup>1</sup>And in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came with all his army against Jerusalem, and laid siege to it; they built siege-works against it all round.
  - <sup>21b</sup>So Judah went into exile out of its land.



# The Book of Daniel



# The Book of Daniel

## Chapter 1

- The political setting - resistance
- Domination by Babylon
- Temple vessels removed – religious symbols placed “under” the Babylonian gods.
- v2 Hebrew “Shinar” same word used for Babel in Genesis 11. Human hubris



# The Book of Daniel

## Chapter 1

- Young men chosen probably from royal or priestly families
- Dominance by name change
- Daniel refuses food
- Danger of being “defiled”
- Purity, integrity, assimilation
- Festival food  
at a time of mourning
- Food of the wealthy  
a product of imperialism



# The Book of Daniel

## Chapter 1

- Daniel receives God's *hesed*
  - favour, compassion, steadfastness, faithkeeping
  - *hesed* is the ground of God's redeeming action
- Young men stand before the King
  - folklore element
  - Court stories
  - setting of awe and majesty
- Daniel serves until the time of Cyrus
  - spans the time of exile.

# The Book of Daniel

## Interpretation

- Setting of exile and resistance and the theme of hubris stimulates art and political movements
- Josephus – toned it down!
- Quakers and Christian radicalism
- 5<sup>th</sup> Monarchy men – 4 empires Dan 2&7
- Verdi & Austrian rule over Italy – Nabucco
- How do we read this in a dominant culture?

# Chorus of Hebrew Slaves

