

Community Group Sermon Notes February 8, 2026

Senior Pastor, Kevin Flannery

Series: Exiles in Babylon: Living as Strangers in a Fallen World

Sermon Title: Overview – Exiles in Babylon, Citizens of a Greater Kingdom

Big Idea: Living as strangers in a fallen world, belonging to God's kingdom forever.

Spring Term: Week 6 of 20



With your groups, as we prepare for next week, please watch (or watch again) a short overview from *The Bible Project*: <https://bibleproject.com/videos/daniel/>.

- As you watch, listen for the big movements: life in Babylon, faithfulness under pressure, & the future hope God gives His people.
- We encourage you to learn from *The Bible Project* (TBP) and to benefit from its big-picture approach to Scripture, while also engaging it with discernment. Some Christians have raised concerns that TBP does not emphasize penal substitution, justification by faith, or sin as strongly as they would prefer. Even so, many of those critics also acknowledge that TBP does not reject these doctrines but rather places less emphasis on them or frames them within a broader biblical storyline than they would personally prefer. As always, we ask you to chew carefully before swallowing. That applies to *The Bible Project* and to everything taught here at Church of the Saviour as well.

Ice breaker: “When did you first realize the world wasn’t as ‘Christian-friendly’ as you assumed (at school, work, online, politics, entertainment, etc.)?” Bonus follow-up: Did you respond more by blending in, withdrawing, or getting angry?

Read and reflect on the book of Daniel, with emphasis on these scriptures for discussion:

- **Daniel 1:1–2** *In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. ² And the Lord delivered Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the articles from the temple of God. These he carried off to the temple of his god in Babylonia and put in the treasure house of his god.*
- **Daniel 2:21–22** ²¹ *He changes times and seasons; he deposes kings and raises up others. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning. ²² He reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what lies in darkness, and light dwells with him.*
- **Daniel 3:17–18** ¹⁷ *If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty’s hand. ¹⁸ But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.”*
- **Daniel 7:13–14** ¹³ *“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. ¹⁴ He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.*

Sermon and Scripture Application Discussion:

1. **Exile is real and God Is Still Ruling.** Daniel opens with loss yet insists that “the Lord delivered” Judah into exile. Why do you think Scripture is honest about pain while still affirming God’s sovereignty? How does it change the way you face difficulty if exile doesn’t mean God has abandoned you?

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2. **Babylon Isn’t Just a Place—It’s a Pressure System.** In Daniel 1, Babylon’s strategy isn’t immediate violence, but long-term formation through education, culture, and identity reshaping. Where do you see “Babylon” trying to *rename* or *reframe* identity today (success, sexuality, ambition, politics, self-worth)? Pastor Kevin emphasizes that Babylon wants more than behavior, it wants allegiance. What are some subtle ways our modern “Babylon” tries to reshape identity rather than openly attack faith? Where do you feel the strongest pressure to compromise or quietly drift?

3. **Faithful Presence.** Daniel’s courage later is built through steady obedience now, see Daniel 1:8-9. Daniel offers a third way that avoids both blending in and lashing out. What does “faithful presence or ordinary faithfulness” look like in your schedule, media consumption, and integrity? Which feels harder for you: setting clear boundaries or showing genuine kindness and humility toward people who think differently?

4. **“Even If” Faith.** Daniel 3 shows a faith that does not bargain with God, see Daniel 3:17–18. Where do you see “quid pro quo Christianity” show up in your heart? Examples: “*God, if I obey you, you owe me...*” How does “even if” faith deepen worship? What would it look like for you to obey God even if it costs your comfort, reputation, or plans? Where might God be inviting you to trust Him without guarantees?

5. **Hope That Builds Stamina,** Daniel 2:21–22, Daniel 7:13–14. The visions in Daniel are meant to steady God’s people, not stir anxiety. What changes in your perspective if you believe history is not spiraling but being steered? How does knowing that God’s kingdom outlasts every empire affect the way you consume news, engage politics, or think about the future? What would it look like for hope to make you calmer and more faithful rather than passive or fearful?

Closing Prayer: Lord, we pray for **courage** for those facing pressure to blend in, compromise, or keep their faith hidden. We pray for **endurance** for those walking through long seasons of suffering, weariness, or discouragement. And we pray for **hope** for those who feel anxious about the future—about our culture, our world, and the next generation. Make us steady, faithful, and confident that You are still ruling, and that Your kingdom will never fail. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Faith in Action:

- February 10, Adult Fellowship Luncheon, 12 PM, Gym (F100)
- February 15, Global Outreach Prayer, 12 PM, B216 Prayer Room
- Who do you know? Help us build the staff team God is calling, visit: www.coswayne.org/join-our-team; Finance Director, Facilities Manager and more.