Lesson 6 · Exile in Babylon

- **Person**
  - Daniel
- **Scope**
  - 609–539 BC · 2 Kings 23–25, 2 Chronicles 36, Habakkuk, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel 1–4
  - The Rise of Babylon · 609–597 BC
  - Zedekiah and the Fall of Jerusalem · 597–586 BC
  - During the Exile · 586–539 BC
- **Before & after**
  - Previous: God's promise is greater than “Assyria”
  - **This lesson: God's promise is greater than “Babylon”**
  - Next: God's promise is greater than “Persia”
- **Discussion**
  - Habakkuk moves from questioning God to “Though the fig tree should not blossom … yet I will rejoice in the LORD” (Hab 3:17–18). What happened in between?
  - Jeremiah tells the exiles to “seek the welfare of the city” (Jer 29:7). What does that mean for us when we live among people who do not believe?
  - God's glory leaves the temple (Ezek 10) and returns to the new temple (Ezek 43). Can God's presence be lost? How is it lost, and how does it come back?
- **Main sentence**
  - **God's promise is greater than “Babylon”**
- **Key verse**
  - Dan 2:44
  - And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever.
- **Five key events**
  - **1 · Habakkuk's Question**
    - Why would God punish Judah with Babylon, which is worse?
    - God's answer: “the righteous shall live by his faith.” The prophet learns to rejoice in God even when the fig tree does not blossom
  - **2 · Three Deportations**
    - In 605 BC Daniel and other youths are taken
    - In 597 Jehoiachin, Ezekiel, and 10,000 more
    - In 586 Jerusalem falls, the temple is destroyed, and Zedekiah is blinded and led away in chains
  - **3 · Jeremiah: 70 Years, New Covenant**
    - Jeremiah urges Judah to surrender and is thrown into a muddy cistern
    - He foretells 70 years of exile, buys a field at Anathoth, and prophesies that God will make a new covenant, writing his law on human hearts
  - **4 · Ezekiel: Glory Departs and Returns**
    - By the river in Babylon, Ezekiel sees God's glory leave the temple
    - Later he sees dry bones live, a new temple, and a river of living water as the glory returns
    - Each person answers for his own sin, and if the wicked turn, God takes no pleasure in his death
  - **5 · Daniel in the Royal Court**
    - Daniel and his three friends keep their faith in a pagan court
    - Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the image: the kingdoms of this world pass one after another, but God's kingdom stands forever