

in America today? Would you say that? I don't think you would. Would you say that its primary purpose is for its help to the Christians in Russia and China today? You would come much nearer, wouldn't you? they are ~~xx~~ facing persecution. They are facing very powerful atheistic, human forces which are trying to destroy their belief in God, and Daniel says, no matter how ~~great~~ the great anti-God forces, God is greater than they. Eventually He is going to destroy them ~~xx~~ and set up His kingdom that cannot be destroyed, and he can deliver his own out of them if he chooses, but whether He does that or not, He is ready to give them grace to endure to the end, and to receive them into eternal happiness with him. So that it is a message specifically adapted for the blessing and help of those who endure persecution for their loyalty to God. That is the specific purpose of Daniel 1-6. Now that being the specific purpose, then, of this, we would ask if this is its specific purpose, is there a ~~xx~~ time when this specific purpose what would be the first time when this specific purpose would become of very great value, and a very ~~great~~ help to them/ people? Well, the people went off ~~in~~ exile. Here they are in Babylonia. We have no record of any great amount of persecution of the Israelites in Babylonia, under the Babylonian empire. ~~The~~ There was some probably, but not much, as far as our records go. And these chapters imply that there was not a great deal. Here were Daniel and his friends received right into the royal palace for training to be leaders in the king's company. Their difficulty came not because they said they believed in God, not because they were Jews, but because they wanted to be excused ~~xx~~ from certain specific commands, the specific command to eat this particular food, and the specific command to worship this particular image. There were specific points of difficulty, but we do not have a picture here that the Israelites were under great wide-spread ~~xx~~ persecution during the Babylonian empire, nor have we any other evidence that they were. And the same relation to the Persians. The Persians took over. Cyrus the great conquered the Babylonian empire, and Cyrus immediately posed as the friend of all the oppressed nations whom the Assyrians and Babylonians had conquered, and we read in his inscriptions how he let the images of the various gods ~~xx~~ be taken back to their homes, and we read in