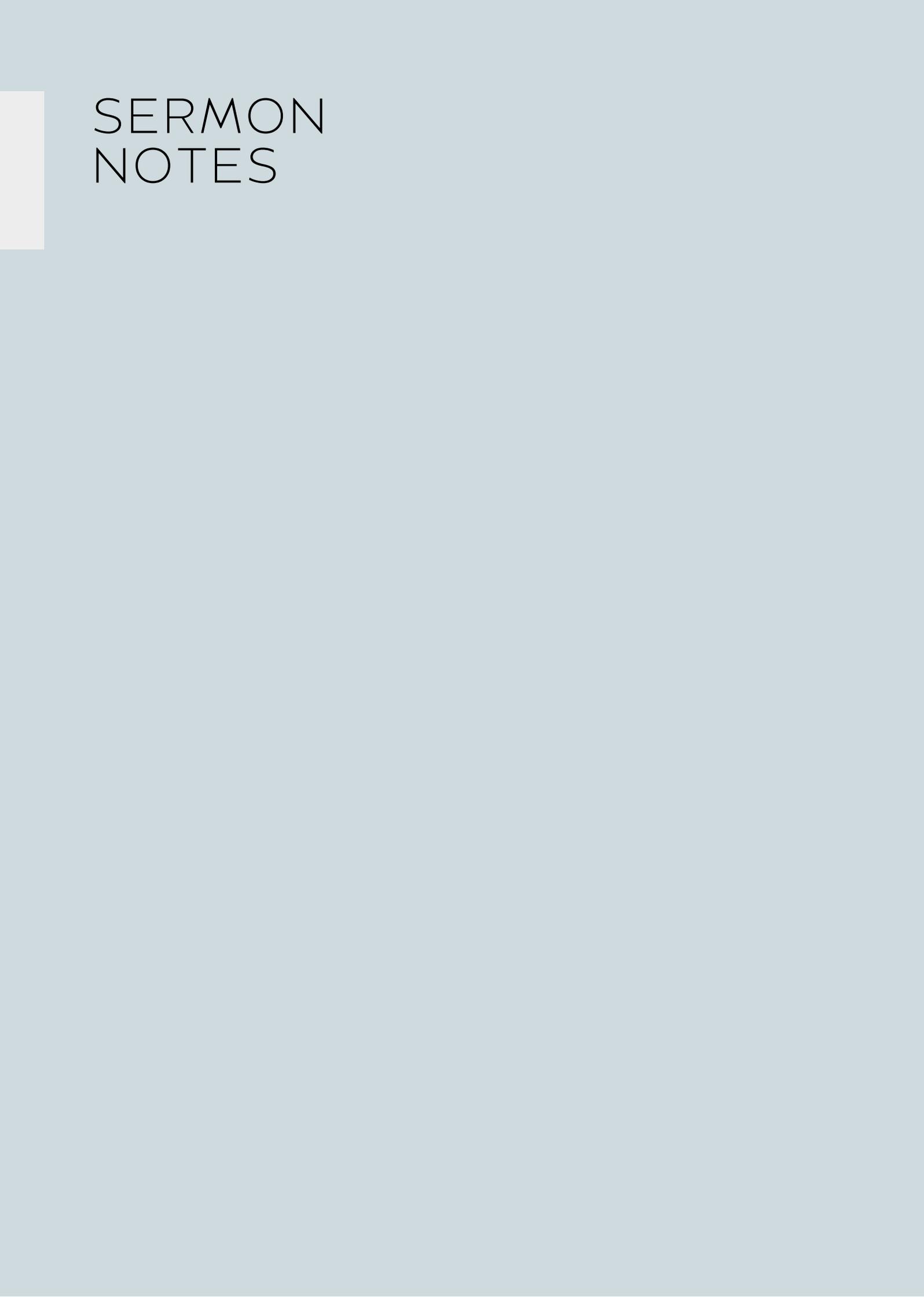




DANIEL 1-7

STUDY
GUIDE

LIVING IN BABYLON



SERMON NOTES

DANIEL 1

stand or fall

1. “When the going gets tough, the tough get going.” How helpful is this statement when facing opposition or the pressure to assimilate as a Christian?

2. Read Daniel 1:1-2. What historical events are being described? (See also 2 Chronicles 36:5-10)

3. Was Israel’s devastating loss to Nebuchadnezzar evidence that God Himself had been defeated? What is the true explanation for the exile?

4. Read Daniel 1:3-7. In what ways did Daniel and his friends face the pressures of a foreign environment?

5. Read Daniel 1:8-17. In a foreign court, what could Daniel accept? What could he not accept?

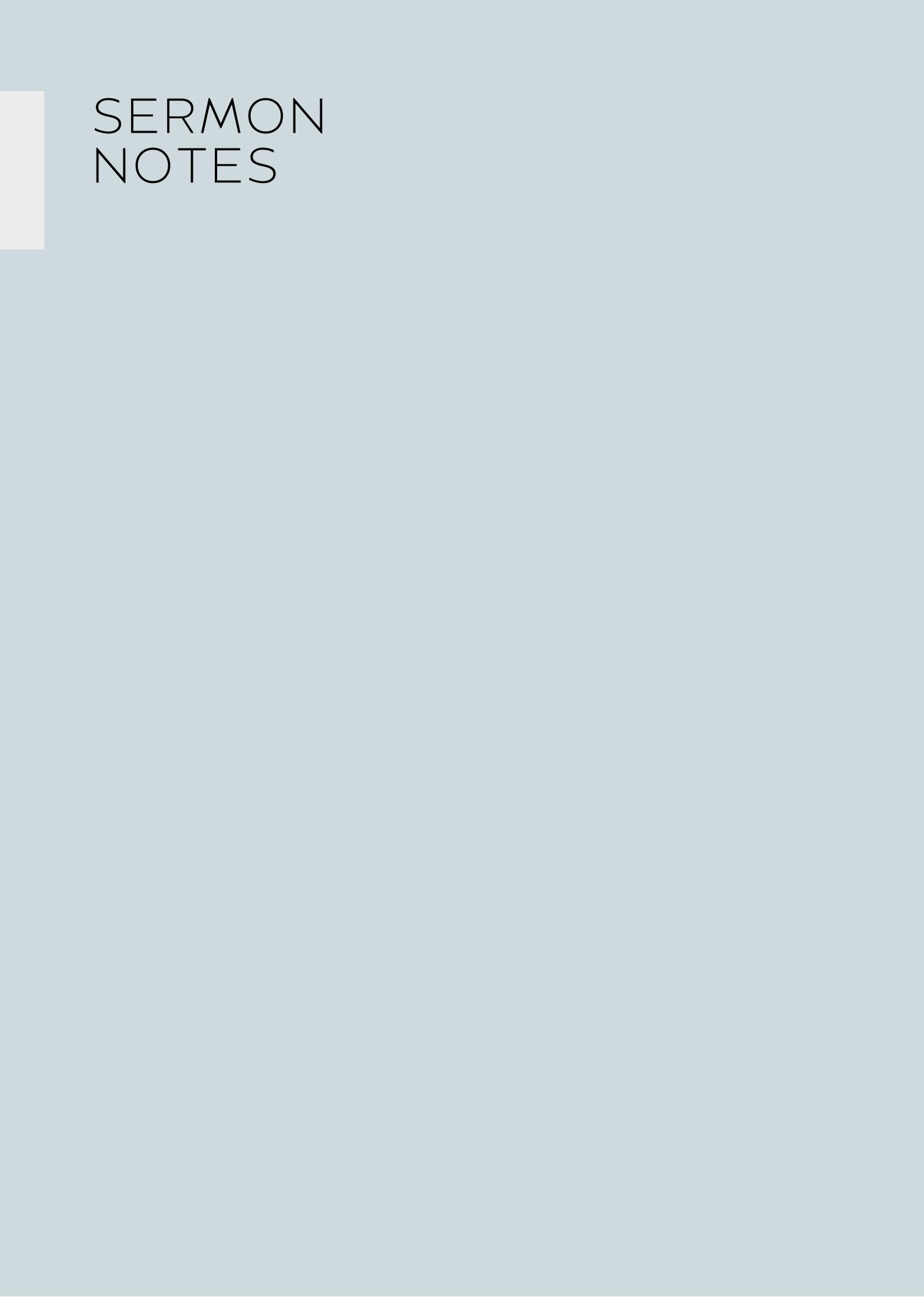
6. Why did Daniel make such a stand?

7. Compare what the chief official expected would happen to Daniel with what actually did happen.

8. Despite the pain of exile, how do we see God still being in control? (v2, 9, 17)

9. In what situations might we need to make a stand against the pressure to assimilate with society so not to compromise our faith?

10. What steps and habits do we need to put in place to remain faithful to God?



SERMON NOTES

DANIEL 2

Speak or die

1. Have you ever had a dream that disturbed you?

2. Read Daniel 2:24-28. How does Daniel's response challenge the King's demands?

3. Read Daniel 2:36-38. How does this passage describe the King's relationship to God? How would this be interpreted by a pagan king?

4. Read Daniel 2:39-45. How does the last kingdom compare to the previous ones?

5. How would this dream give hope for God's people in exile? How would it call for patience?

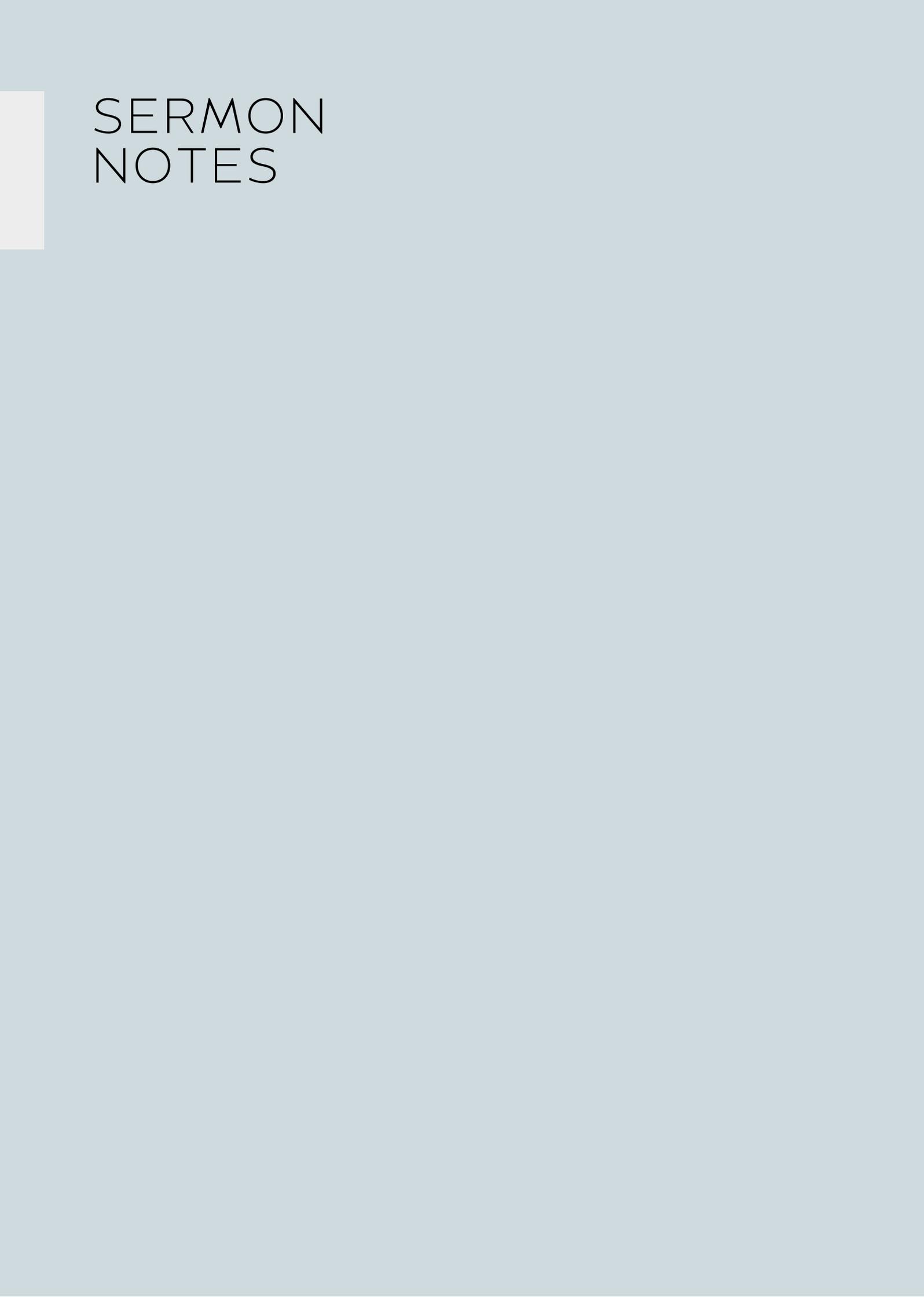
6. How does this provide background to Jesus' announcement in Mark 1:15?

7. Read Daniel 2:46-49. Does this indicate that Nebuchadnezzar was willing to change his belief? What led to this change? How does his confession compare to the Hebrew faith? (Deuteronomy 6:4, 10:17)

8. In what ways was Daniel a saviour? How did he do it?

9. What mysteries have been revealed to us? Colossians 1:26-29.

10. What role do we play in revealing God's plan?



SERMON NOTES

DANIEL 3

worship or die

1. Read Daniel 3. Should children hear this story? Why/why not?

2. What political advantage would there be in making a decree like this?

3. What themes and detail does this story share with Daniel 2?

4. How does the king's actions contradict his confession in 2:47?

5. How do the three men remain obedient to Deuteronomy 5:8-10?

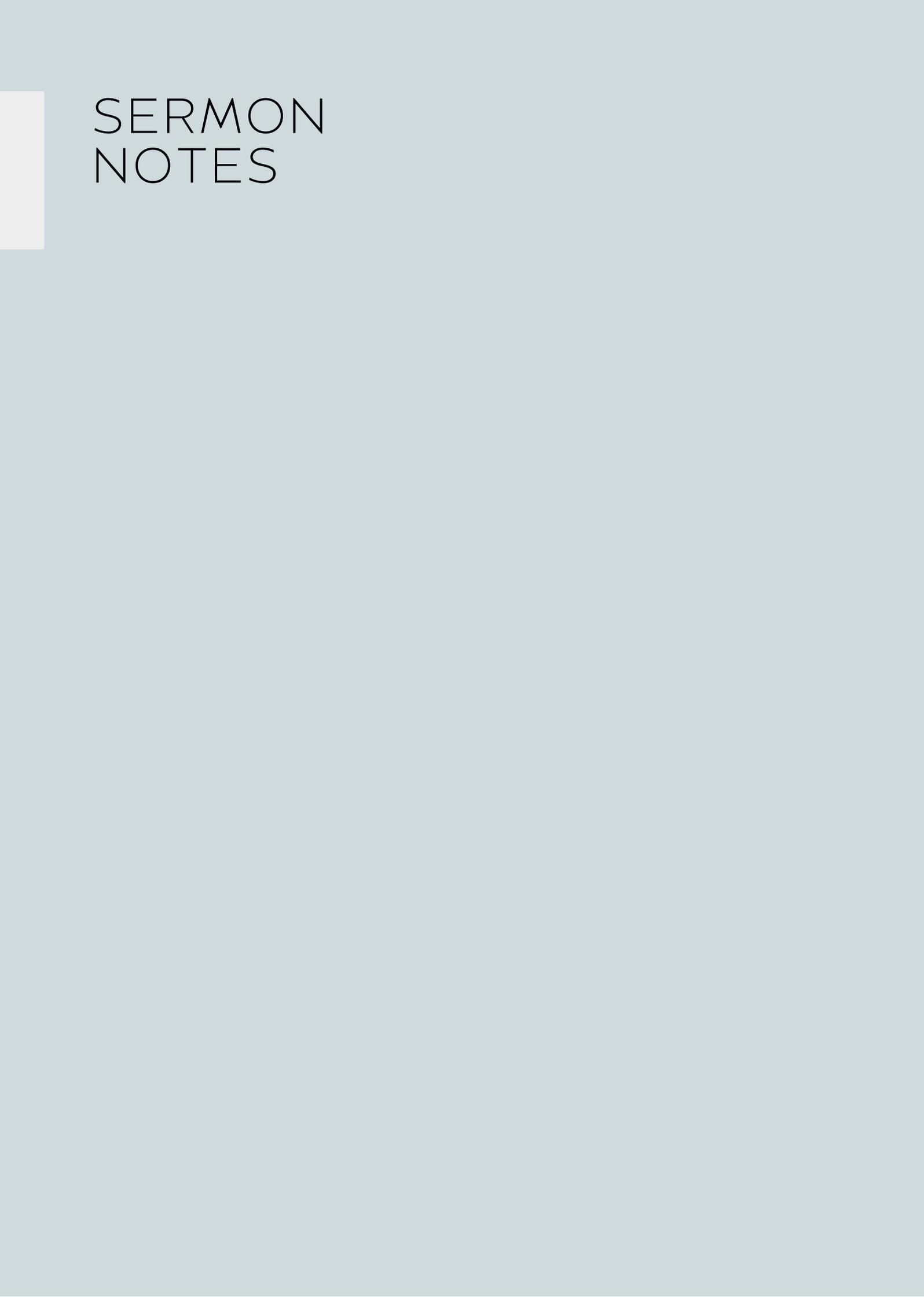
6. Discuss the difficulties for the exiles, living in a foreign country, under pagan rule.

7. Reread 3:17. What gave them this confidence?

8. Who is the fourth man in the furnace? What is his role in this story?

9. Reread Daniel 3:28-29. In what ways does this confession go further than the one in 2:47? What is the irony of this decree? Should this be a new statutory requirement in Australia?

10. What acts of false worship does our increasingly secular state demand of us? What are the consequences of resisting?



SERMON NOTES

DANIEL 4

humble yourself or be cut down

1. The statement: "Pride comes before a fall" is based on Proverbs 16:18. Can you think of instances where this transpired?

2. Read Daniel 4:1-30, which comes to us as a royal document by King Nebuchadnezzar. Describe the mind and attitude of Nebuchadnezzar in relation to his accomplishments.

3. What makes Nebuchadnezzar's omission in 4:29-30 particularly disappointing in light of the vision in 4:1-27? (See also his experiences in Daniel 2:47, 3:28-29).

4. What does Nebuchadnezzar's example teach us about the insidious nature of pride?

5. Read Daniel 4:31-33. How does God humble Nebuchadnezzar?

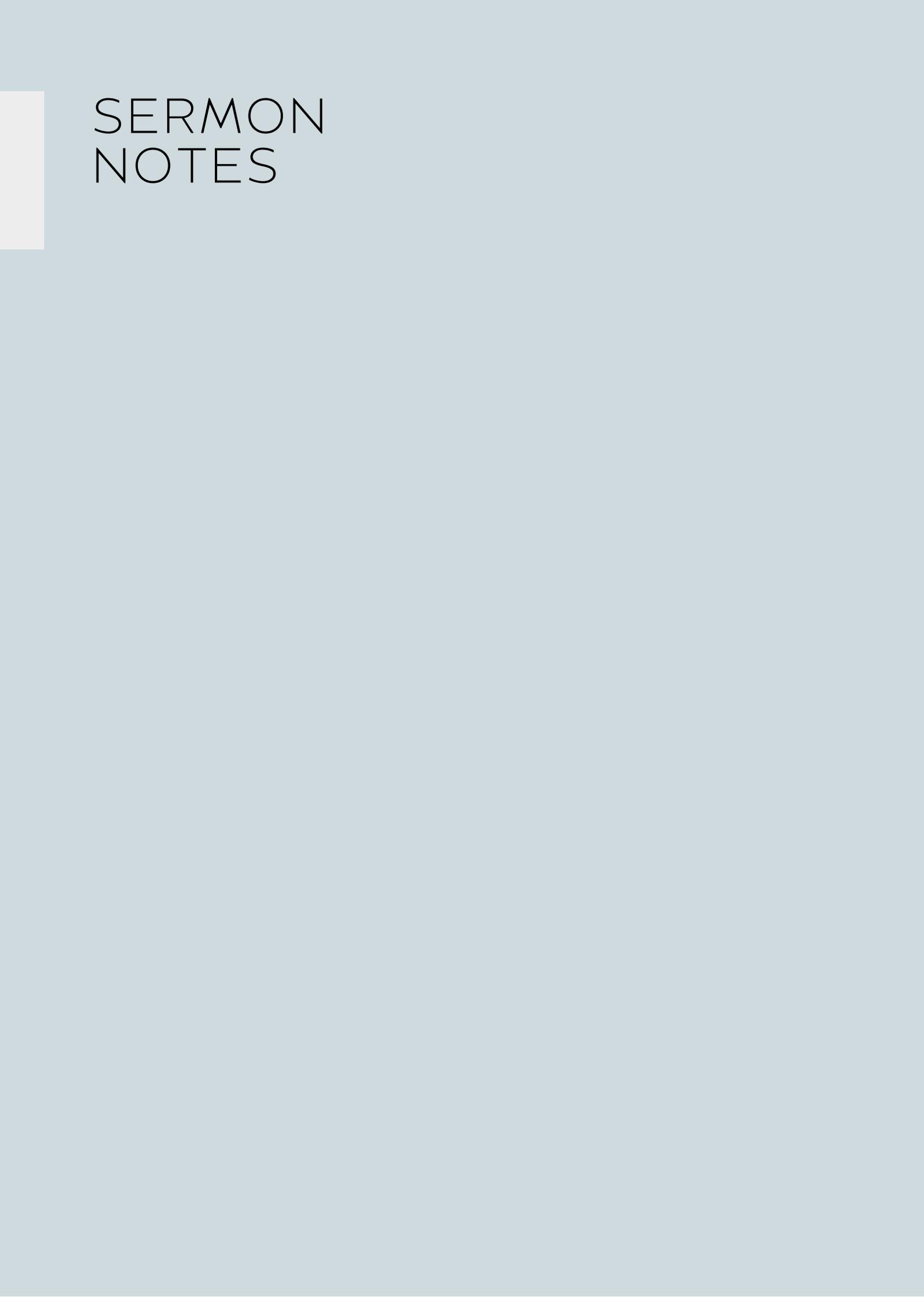
6. Describe how the exiles would have felt when they heard this report about what had happened to Nebuchadnezzar.

7. Read Daniel 4:34-37. What does Nebuchadnezzar come to realise about God? (See also 4:1-3).

8. In what ways does pride tend to manifest in our lives?

9. How does this passage challenge us in regards to our pride? (See also Philippians 2:1-11)

10. How are we to prayerfully respond when we are at the receiving end of someone else's arrogance? (1 Peter 2:22-23)

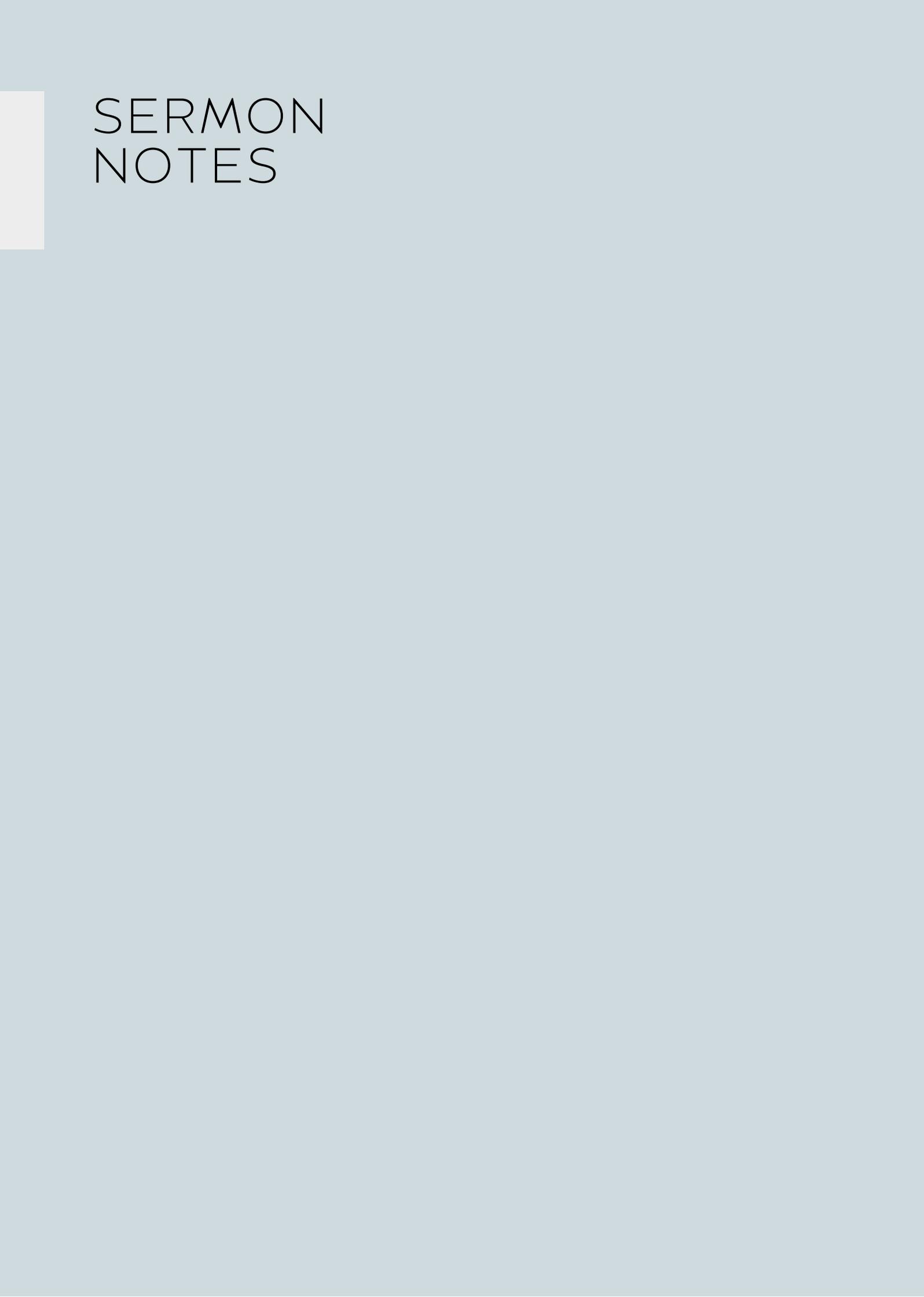


SERMON NOTES

DANIEL 5

forbidden profanity

1. What offends God?
2. Read Daniel 5:1-6. Describe Belshazzar's actions.
3. Read Daniel 5:13-30. What was key to Nebuchadnezzar's long reign?
4. What is the message of the writing on the wall?
5. How does Belshazzar respond?
6. How does the writing on the wall explain the events of vs 30-31?
7. Read Dan 2:21. How would Daniel interpret the historic events of the changing empire?
8. How would this story minister to God's people in exile?
9. Read Acts 17:24-31. What is the 'writing on the wall' for people today?
10. How will humans be weighed?



SERMON NOTES

DANIEL 6

forbidden prayer

1. Imagine that overnight, the Australian government passed a law that made prayer illegal everywhere in the country; the punishment for praying with your family or even silently in your own home, was imprisonment.

- a. What would you do?
- b. Based on your pattern of prayer right now, how likely is it that you would be convicted?

2. Read Daniel 6. What do v1-18 tell us about:

- a. King Darius
- b. The satraps, officials, governors etc.
- c. Daniel
- d. God

3. In v25-27, how does God's power compare to that of the Persian king?

4. In Daniel's moment of crisis, he entrusts himself to "his God" in prayer, "just as he had done before" (v10); in contrast to the officials and even to the king, who turn to scheming or frantic planning (v5, 14).

a. What does 'the world' rely on in their time of need?

b. How might we be tempted to rely on these things, rather than on God?

c. How might Daniel's example encourage (or rebuke!) us in our own prayers?

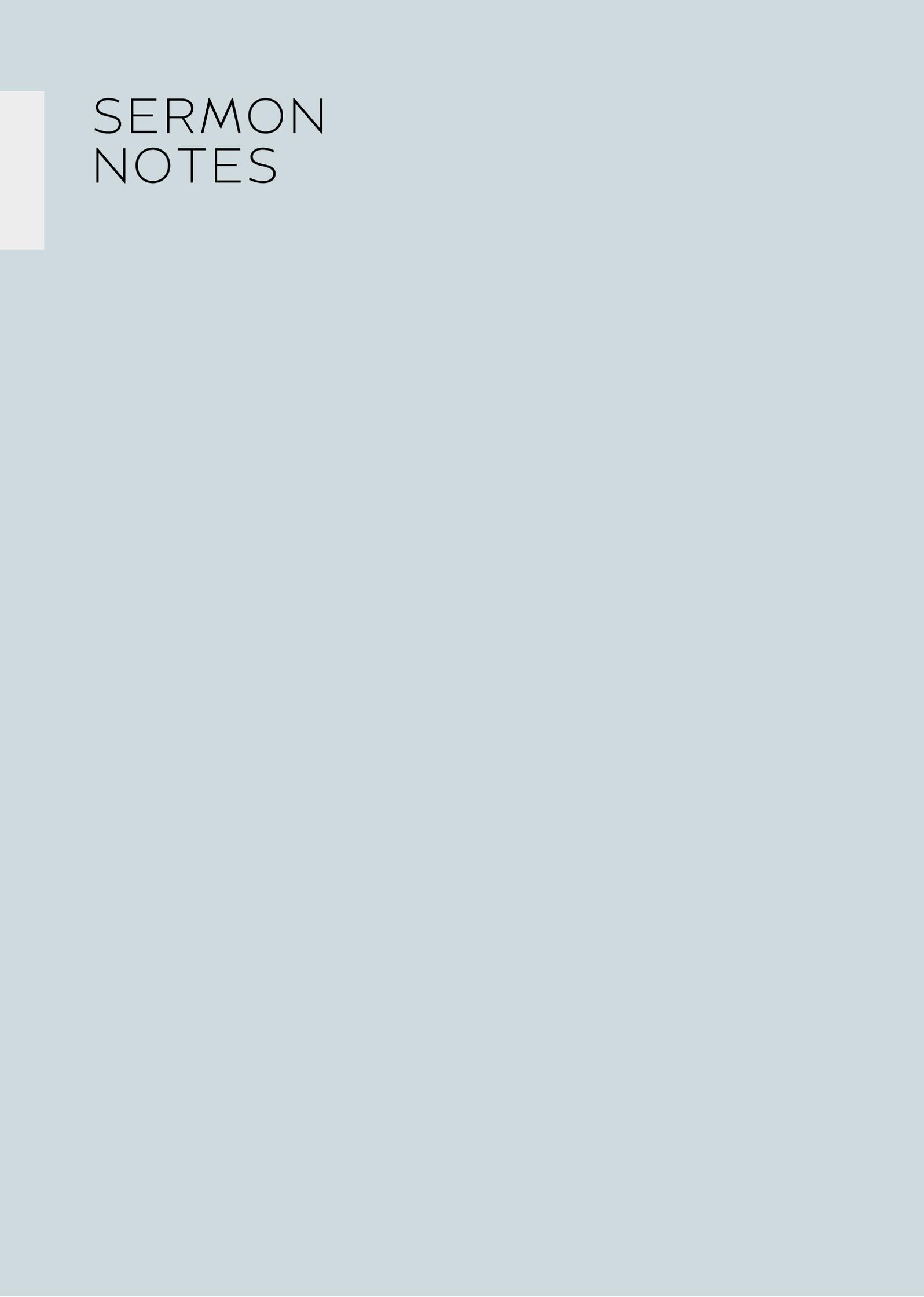
5. In the life of Daniel, we see a foreshadowing of the life of Jesus: an innocent man persecuted for his faithfulness, whom God redeems from death (cf. Luke 24:44-45). But Daniel is also a great example for us because of his trust in God (Hebrews 11:33).

a. In your current circumstances (at work or school, with friends or family, by yourself...), what might it look like for you to go along with what's easier, even if it's contrary to what God's word might say?

b. What would it look like to remain faithful, even if it's costly to you?

6. How might your prayers change in light of Daniel 6?

What can you do to enact these changes?



SERMON NOTES

DANIEL 7

an everlasting kingdom

1. What does it mean to be human?

2. Read Daniel 7:1-15. What was it about this dream that troubled Daniel?

3. Read Genesis 2:28. How does Daniel's vision contrast to God's purpose for humans? How is that restored in 7:13-14?

4. Read Daniel 7:15-28. How would this prepare God's people in exile for what they were about to face?

5. What does God's sovereign power mean to you? Why should we teach about it?

6. What is the impact of describing the worldly kingdoms as beasts?

7. Read John 12:23-24. How does Daniel 7:13-14 provide background for what Jesus was about to face?

8. How do those in power act in beastly ways today?

9. What are the power struggles that we face today?

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Published September 2022

BIBLE TIMELINE

