

Daniel: Chapter 3
(God-the Lord of fire)

Chapter 3:1-30: The Image of Gold

Dan 3:1 Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height *was* threescore cubits, *and* the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.

- the king made- *"Some gods are in the shape of statues"*. The king had this statue commissioned. The statue was 90' high by 9' thick. We are not told if it stood on a pedestal or if it was solid gold. Gold was in such abundance at this time because of the spoils of war and otherwise, but not enough that this image would have been solid. (*Isa 40:19*)

=====

Dan 3:2 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

Dan 3:3 Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

- Everyone in authority was to come to the dedication of the king's dumb (*I Cor 12:2; 8:4*) idol. Because they knew of his temperament they showed up.

=====

Dan 3:4 Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages,

Dan 3:5 That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up:

Dan 3:6 And whoso falleth not down and worshipping shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

Dan 3:7 Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of musick, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down *and* worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

- The edict came with the consequence for not obeying. Just as in Rome concerning the "image of the beast" or busts of Caesar that Roman officials used to decipher between idol worshippers and true Christians- *Rev 13:14-15*.

- whoso falleth not down- pagan religious non-conformity was punished with retribution. The act created a lot of hypocrites. *"You can make (a man) bow the knee but you can never know (if) he has bowed the heart"*.

- burning fiery furnace- Punishment for not conforming to a forced religion. (*Like radical Islam or the crusades of Catholicism.*)

=====

Dan 3:8 Wherefore at that time certain Chaldeans came near, and accused the Jews.

- certain Chaldeans- (*Rev 12:10 "...accuser of our brethren..."*) There will always be "certain Chaldeans". These were obviously jealous of the Jews because of their status with the king. These Jews would have been held in favor with the king because they would have been of the captivity that was also in favor with God.

=====

Dan 3:9 They spake and said to the king **Nebuchadnezzar**, O king, live for ever.

- It seems that just about everyone wanted to be on the king's good side, even if it meant kissing up to the king using flattery and betraying others who were of a higher standing with him. They saw what honor **Nebuchadnezzar** had bestowed on the Jews.

=====

Dan 3:10 Thou, O king, hast made a decree, that every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, shall fall down and worship the golden image:

Dan 3:11 And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth, *that* he should be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

- Here the Chaldeans remind the king of his edict to purposely fuel his anger. (*Dan 6:1-5, 12*)

=====

Dan 3:12 There are certain Jews whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of **Babylon**, **Shadrach**, **Meshach**, and **Abednego**; these men, O king, have not regarded thee: they serve not thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

- "*He who will not defend himself but commits his way to the Lord, humbles himself; and in humbling himself will be victor indeed.*" Jealousy can be ugly. The Jews in question were named specifically. These were probably given their positions at the expense of their Chaldean counterparts.

=====

Dan 3:13 Then **Nebuchadnezzar** in *his* rage and fury commanded to bring **Shadrach**, **Meshach**, and **Abednego**. Then they brought these men before the king.

- How easy it would have been to obey this ridiculous edit by this temperamental tyrant who earlier honored these three "*by giving them exalted positions*". "*Most men can oppose their enemies but it takes a special person to oppose his friends*"- Goethe. (*Lk 22:48 ...betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?*)

=====

Dan 3:14 **Nebuchadnezzar** spake and said unto them, *Is it true*, O **Shadrach**, **Meshach**, and **Abednego**, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?

- *Is it true*- as if the king cannot believe that there would be some in his kingdom that would refuse him? After all, look what **I've** done for you! Put in modern terms, can we refuse our employer when asked to do something immoral?

=====

Dan 3:15 Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made; *well*: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the

same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who *is* that **God** that shall deliver you out of my hands?

- Here the king is willing to give these three Jews another opportunity to obey his edict. Was his ego so bloated that he could believe there was not one person in all Babylon who would not heed his ridiculous command? How could the king forget his confession of 2:47 so quickly?

=====

Dan 3:16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we *are* not careful to answer thee in this matter.

- not careful- (*Heb.2818-to be necessary.*) In the negative, it was not necessary for them to give Nebuchadnezzar an answer on his threat as if to say he didn't really have a say in the matter.
- "...when you've lived constantly in the presence of the KING other little kings don't frighten you". This law conflicted with the teaching of the real King, and there was no apology necessary.

=====

Dan 3:17 If it be *so*, our **God** whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and **He** will deliver *us* out of thine hand, O king.

- *"You threaten with the fire that burns for a time, and is quickly quenched, for you do not know the fire that awaits the wicked in the judgment to come and in everlasting punishment. But why are you waiting? Come, do what you will."* Polycarp- The Eternal Kingdom, A History of the Church, F.W. Mattox, pgs. 94-95.
- If it is within **God's** plan, **He** is of the ability to save us, and you are powerless, Nebuchadnezzar, to go against Him.

=====

Dan 3:18 But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

- If **God's** will is that we perish, let it be done. Your threat holds no power. We would rather die.

Mat 10:28 **And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.**

Act 4:19 But **Peter** and **John** answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of **God** to hearken unto you more than unto **God**, judge ye. **20**For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.

(...but everyone else is doing it...but if you live you can do more for **God** later...just go through the motions, **God** knows your heart...)

Rev 14:13 And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed *are* the dead which die in the **Lord** from henceforth: Yea, saith the **Spirit**, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

Jas 4:14 Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

- Their answer gives us encouragement now some 2,500 years later.

=====

Dan 3:19 Then was **Nebuchadnezzar** full of fury, and the form of his visage (*face*) was changed against **Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego**: *therefore* he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated.

Dan 3:20 And he commanded the most mighty men that *were* in his army to bind **Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego**, and to cast *them* into the burning fiery furnace.

Dan 3:21 Then these men were bound in their coats (*cloak*), their hosen (*gown*), and their hats (*mantle*), and their *other* garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

Dan 3:22 Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that took up **Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego**.

Dan 3:23 And these three men, **Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego**, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

- Because of their "*anxiety to serve and please the raging tyrant*" those performing the task of throwing these three saints into the furnace got too close. Fully dressed the three were cast bound into the flame.

=====

Dan 3:24 Then **Nebuchadnezzar** the king was astonished (*alarmed, amazed*), and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king.

Dan 3:25 He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the **Son of God**.

Dan 3:26 Then **Nebuchadnezzar** came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, and spake, and said, **Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego**, ye servants of the most high **God**, come forth, and come *hither*. Then **Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego**, came forth of the midst of the fire.

Dan 3:27 And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them.

- "*The fire that has no power over them has eaten away their bonds.*" The king must have been metaphorically scratching his royal head.

Psa 2:4 He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the **Lord** shall have them in derision.

- "*...in life itself it's only through the fire that we find freedom from our bonds*".

Joh 12:25 He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

- like the **Son of God**- or "like a son of the gods" (ASV). Either way, what **Nebuchadnezzar** saw was definitely out of the ordinary. It was at least an

epiphany of Christ. The fourth person in the furnace was a representative from God. (*Jer 1:8; 19; 15:21*)

This heavenly being appears to the three Jews here kind of like the way one did in Luke 22:43, possibly to strengthen and encourage them in their faithfulness.

Luk 22:43 And there appeared an angel unto Him from Heaven, strengthening Him.

- It was as though no fire existed. God is in control of the elements to do His will (*Rev 14:18*).

Dan 3:28 Then Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent His angel, and delivered His servants that trusted in Him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God.

- His angel- The Angel of the Lord. This Person is found several times throughout the Old Testament. He is the pre-incarnate Son of God. It is as if Nebuchadnezzar was inspired to state the identity of the visitor.
- From screaming to have these three thrown into the fiery furnace to asking them to come forth, the king is unpredictable. Today we walk "on the graves of the kingdoms" who sought to destroy the saints of God! Now Nebuchadnezzar sees God as: "Lord of Fire; Protector of Captives; Offender of Idols and Frustrator of Raging Monarchs. Too powerful not to praise; too available to His servants and too ready to act on their behalf."

Dan 3:29 Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort.

- a decree- "He had just made one that he himself admits was changed by God so he's well aware of the kind of decree he must make in order for it to stand." Not to lose face, the king himself is seen here kissing up to a higher (the highest) Monarch. But does this (2:47) convert the king (chapter 4)?

Dan 3:30 Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, in the province of Babylon.

- The three captives are again promoted. (2:49) Of course you would want someone on your side that can have their God in your corner.