

Daniel 3 Part 2

The Fiery Ordeal

Presented by Fred DeRuvo

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Daniel 3: The Results

- Recapping the overall interpretation of the statue's meaning in Nebuchadnezzar's dream:
- Warren Wiersbe noted four implications of this vision:
 - God is in control of history;
 - human enterprises decline as time goes by;
 - it will be difficult for things to hold together at the end of the age; and
 - Jesus Christ will return, destroy His enemies, and establish His kingdom

2

Daniel 3: The Results

- The three young men refused to worship the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up
- They chose the “narrow” way, toward humility, rejecting self-exaltation
- Their refusal resulted in the execution of the king’s command (**3:19-23**)
- The king demanded the furnace be heated to 7 times hotter than normal
- 7 times more is a figure of speech which may have meant make it hotter or “as hot as possible”

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Daniel 3: The Results

- ¹⁹ Then Nebuchadnezzar was full of fury, and the expression on his face changed toward Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. He spoke and commanded that they heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated. ²⁰ And he commanded certain mighty men of valor who *were* in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, *and* cast *them* into the burning fiery furnace. ²¹ Then these men were bound in their coats, their trousers, their turbans, and their *other* garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. ²² Therefore, because the king’s command was urgent, and the furnace exceedingly hot, the flame of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. ²³ And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

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Daniel 3: The Results

- Nebuchadnezzar's anger prompted him to demand the furnace be heated more than it was normally
- The fact that the men who threw the three men into the furnace died proves God's promises to Abraham (**Genesis 12:3**)
- We can also see this with Haman (**Esther 7:10**)
- Those who attack God's people pay the consequences

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Daniel 3: The Results

- The furnace may have been shaped like an inverted beehive with doors/windows on the side
- This is what allowed Nebuchadnezzar to see what was going on within
- He likely marveled that the three men did not die immediately and showed no sign of even being affected by the flames/heat

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Daniel 3: The Results

- 24 Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and he rose in haste and spoke, saying to his counselors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?"
- They answered and said to the king, "True, O king."
- 25 "Look!" he answered, "I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

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Daniel 3: The Results

- Consider the three men were not only saved from the actual flames, heat and soot, but
- Also from carbon monoxide poisoning, asphyxiation and other caustic fumes
- They were able to breathe as normal
- As Nebuchadnezzar watched, he was amazed to see a 4th Person in the furnace with the three like a "son of God" or "superhuman"

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Daniel 3: The Results

- Interestingly the 4th individual – angel, Angel of the Lord, or Preincarnate Christ – did not deliver them FROM the fire, but kept them safe within it
- Nebuchadnezzar called the three men to come out and they obeyed (v 26)
- Notice Nebuchadnezzar’s use of the phrase “servants of the Most High God”
- This particular title for God appears 13 times in Daniel, more than any other book except the Psalms

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Daniel 3: The Results

- Nebuchadnezzar’s use of the title – Most High God – points to a universal authority but does not necessarily detail God’s personal qualities
- Nebuchadnezzar – a pagan – is simply saying that this God was the highest of all **KNOWN** deities
- Nebuchadnezzar was admitting the three men’s God had more power than all other gods
- This God was able to deliver the men as they said He could

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Daniel 3: The Results

- Notice that the ropes that bound the three men were burned in the fire (**v 25**)
- The ropes symbolize Nebuchadnezzar's power over them
- God was clearly stating that compared to Him, Nebuchadnezzar had no power over the men
- Their destiny was in God's hands, not Nebuchadnezzar's

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Daniel 3: The Results

- The lesson here for us is the same –
- God exercises power over our lives
- When we trust Him, He will act for His own good pleasure and glory
- It's good to point out that these three men were able to face the fiery furnace because their **fear of (offending) God** was strong

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Daniel 3: The Results

- **Psalm 147:10-11** states:
 - *He does not delight in the strength of the horse,*
 - *He takes no pleasure in the legs of a man*
 - *The Lord takes pleasure in those who fear Him,*
 - *In those who hope in His mercy*

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Daniel 3: Fearing the Lord

- In that **Psalms** passage and many others throughout the Bible, the fear of the Lord is the key to living a godly life
- What is the fear of the Lord?
- It is the fear of *OFFENDING* Him
- Living in a way that refuses to grieve, sadden or anger God
- It is the development and growth of this fear that brings about holy living naturally as it provides strength, discernment, wisdom and power to obey Him in all things
- It takes time to develop as well and anything else is simply religiosity (or *Phariseeism* or *self-effort/legalism*)

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Daniel 3: Fearing the Lord

- Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego (along with Daniel) knew what it was to fear (OFFENDING) the Lord.
- Because they feared offending Him, they became resolute in what they knew to be the correct way to live before Him
- Fearing to offend the Lord promotes living *rightly*
- It pushes us toward *humility* (narrow gate) and away from self-exaltation (wide gate)
- We cannot live rightly without a healthy fear of offending the Lord
- This fear provides the strength regardless of consequences to us

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Daniel 3: The Results

- Nebuchadnezzar is symbolic of the entire period of the Times of the Gentiles
- The deliverance of the three men is indicative of Israel's deliverance through her fiery trials
- At the end of the Times of the Gentiles during the Tribulation, Israel will be tried by severe fire
- From all Jews living then, God will pull His final remnant fulfilling His words in **Romans 9-11** – "*all Israel will be saved*" (**Romans 11:26**)
- That final Remnant will enter the Millennial Kingdom and enjoy the full promises given to Abraham

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Daniel 3: God's Rebuke

- God literally rebuked not only Nebuchadnezzar but the Chaldeans themselves by saving the three young men in the fiery furnace
- The Chaldeans worshipped the fire, as a sort of image of the sun, so that, in restraining the fire now, God put contempt, not only upon their king, but upon their god too (Constable)

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Daniel 3: The Result

- ²⁸ Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, who sent His Angel and delivered His servants who trusted in Him, and they have frustrated the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they should not serve nor worship any god except their own God! ²⁹ Therefore I make a decree that any people, nation, or language which speaks anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made an ash heap; because there is no other God who can deliver like this."
- ³⁰ Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego in the province of Babylon.

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Daniel 3: The Result

- Because God saved the three young men, Nebuchadnezzar then saw their God as superior to all Babylonian gods
- He ultimately acknowledged their God as superior over his own god, Nebo
- Because of this, Nebuchadnezzar issued a new rule that all should respect Yahweh and say nothing derogatory
- This is another proof that Nebuchadnezzar was supreme ruler, answering to no one on earth

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Daniel 3: The Result

- Nebuchadnezzar essentially made Judaism a recognized religion to be respected
- The Judean captives had a relatively easy life in Babylon after this versus life in Egypt
- Nebuchadnezzar tried to unite all Babylon under one religion
- In the end, he ended up acknowledging Yahweh and endorsing worship of Him
- Nebuchadnezzar did not at this point abandon his polytheism; he simply added Yahweh to it

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Daniel 3: The Result

- Nebuchadnezzar also blessed the three young men
- He stamped his approval on their faith in Yahweh who was as powerful as they had said he was
- Segue to the future Tribulation and Antichrist
- He will demand to be worshiped
- Any who resist will be killed

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Daniel 3: The Result

- Satan plays this card throughout history but it will become the dividing point in the future for all
- Many throughout the world will worship Antichrist – Gentiles and many Jews
- Those who refuse will be punished leading up to martyrdom

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Daniel 3: The Result

- Chapter 3 shows that Yahweh is powerful enough to control history miraculously. He does so
 - to remain true to His promises to His people, and
 - to deliver those who put their trust in Him.
 - He can reveal the future, but He can also bring it into existence. - Dr. Thomas Constable