
Daniel: Faithful in a Foreign Land
Refined: God is IN the fire
Daniel 3:1-28

37 Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. 38 And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. 39 Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

- Matthew 10:37-39

King Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold, whose height was sixty cubits and its breadth six cubits. He set it up on the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. 2 Then King Nebuchadnezzar sent to gather the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces to come to the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

- Daniel 3:1-2



Daniel 3

Main Idea: We will not fear man, if we have learned to Fear God first.

- 1-2: Consolidation of Power- making the relative absolute and the absolute relative
- 8-11: The Watching World
- 13-15: The Pride of Power
- 16-18: Faithful Witness
- 19-25: Saved IN the Fire
- 26-30: God is Glorified

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“Even though there is a drive to relativize absolutes (many gods), men and women cannot live without them. So they eventually take something of relative value and absolutise it (the State). That is, they regard it as the core value that determines their attitude to everything else”

- John Lennox, “Against the Flow”, p137

“Making the relative absolute means elevating human culture, temporal values, or social norms to the status of unyielding divine truth—effectively committing idolatry. Conversely, making the absolute relative means dragging God's eternal truth, his moral law, and the Gospel down to the changing, subjective opinions of a particular culture or era”

Daniel Principles

- **vss 1-2:** Jesus has a claim on absolute truth and authority over our lives. . . he cannot be relativized into your truth and my truth.

8 Therefore at that time certain Chaldeans came forward and
maliciously accused the Jews. 9 They declared to King
Nebuchadnezzar, “O king, live forever! 10 You, O king, have made a
decree, that every man who hears the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre,
trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, shall fall down and
worship the golden image. 11 And whoever does not fall down and
worship shall be cast into a burning fiery furnace. 12 There are
certain Jews whom you have appointed over the affairs of the
province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These
men, O king, pay no attention to you; they do not serve your gods
or worship the golden image that you have set up.”

- Daniel 3:8-12

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- **vss 8-13:** our faith is personal, but not private.

“I look upon all the world as my parish; thus far I mean, that, in whatever part of it I am, I judge it meet, right, and my bounden duty to declare unto all that are willing to hear, the glad tidings of salvation.”

— John Wesley, Letter of 1739.

13 Then Nebuchadnezzar in furious rage commanded that
Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be brought. So they brought
these men before the king. 14 Nebuchadnezzar answered and
said to them, “Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego,
that you do not serve my gods or worship the golden image that I
have set up? 15 Now if you are ready when you hear the sound of
the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of
music, to fall down and worship the image that I have made, well
and good. But if you do not worship, you shall immediately be
cast into a burning fiery furnace. And who is the god who will
deliver you out of my hands?”

- Daniel 3:13-15

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- **vss 13-15:** A tyrant cannot tolerate a higher authority.

16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. 17 If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. 18 But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.”

- Daniel 3:16-18

“We must obey God rather than men”

- Acts 5:29

“Trust in God implies the recognition of His power, of his omnipotence. It is one thing to have a general conviction about God’s omnipotence; it is quite another to believe that He can do what seems to be completely contrary to nature, namely deliver men from fire.”

- Sinclair Ferguson

In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.”

- James 2:17

But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.”

- Daniel 3:18

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- **vss16-18: Their faith was not in their deliverance, but rather in their God.**

"Feared the face of no man because he had learned to fear the Lord. He who stands in awe of God need not tremble before men.”

- John Knox, biographer

“Remember the word that I said to you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours.”

- John 15:20

19 Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with fury, and the expression of his face was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He ordered the furnace heated seven times more than it was usually heated. 20 And he ordered some of the mighty men of his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace. 21 Then these men were bound in their cloaks, their tunics, their hats, and their other garments, and they were thrown into the burning fiery furnace. . .

24 Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and rose up in haste. He declared to his counselors, “Did we not cast three men bound into the fire?” They answered and said to the king, “True, O king.” 25 He answered and said, “But I see four men unbound, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods.”

- Daniel 3:19-25

For you, O God, have tested us; you have tried us as silver is tried.
11 You brought us into the net; you laid a crushing burden on our backs; 12 you let men ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water; yet you have brought us out to a place of abundance.

— Psalm 66:10-12

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- **vss 19-25**:God doesn’t always save us FROM the fire but he will save us IN the fire.

“There is an important matter of principle here. God is a great deliverer- but he will not deliver us from having to make our own decisions. This is not because he is impotent but because he wants us to be strong. The development of our character depends crucially on the fact that we make responsible decisions before God for ourselves. For God to “decide” for us would be to de-humanize us and essentially turn us into amoral robots.”

-John Lennox, “Against the Flow”

"Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps”

- 1 Peter 2:21

“Do not pray that our trial be removed, pray that we will have God’s power to endure to give witness to Jesus Christ in our trials.”

- Persecuted Christians in Laos

26 Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the door of the burning fiery furnace; he declared, “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out, and come here!” Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out from the fire. 27 And the satraps, the prefects, the governors, and the king's counselors gathered together and saw that the fire had not had any power over the bodies of those men. The hair of their heads was not singed, their cloaks were not harmed, and no smell of fire had come upon them. 28 Nebuchadnezzar answered and said, “Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his angel and delivered his servants, who trusted in him, and set aside the king's command, and yielded up their bodies rather than serve and worship any god except their own God.

- Daniel 3:26-28

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- **vss 26-28:** The kingdom of God is greater than the kingdom of men.

3 Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body.

- Hebrews 13:3

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"If we are faithful to God in little things, we shall gain experience and strength that will be helpful to us in the more serious trials of life.”

-Hudson Taylor, A Retrospect

“Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. 2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. 3 For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.

- Isaiah 43:1-3