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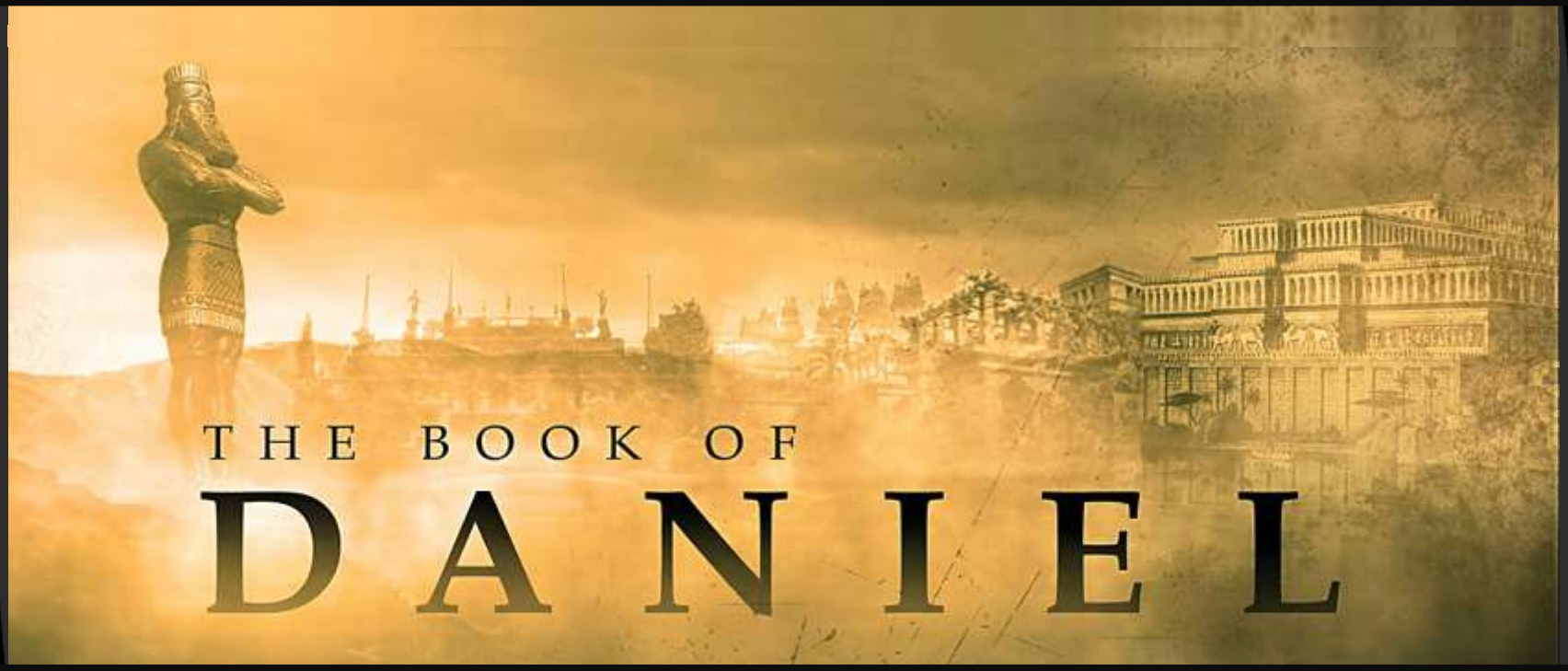

...a verse by verse study

Introduction

- Daniel, as a young 14 yr old Jewish boy was taken captive from his homeland in 606 B.C.
- He and his three friends were put into an intensive 3-yr training program so they could become advisors to the king.
- Yet Daniel ‘purposed in his heart’ not to be defiled by the extravagance and excess that Babylon offered.
- At the end of the 3-years Daniel & fiends were found 10x better than the others

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

- None can interpret – or event 'remember' the dream so the king decrees that all should be killed 2:12
- Daniel – still in his training period - hears of this and petitions the king for time to seek his God 2:16
- Daniel then goes home and gives the good news to his friends!

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

- *"Guess what guys, the king has had a dream. No one could figure it out so he was going to kill all of us…..But I told him that me and my buddies would be able to work it out! How cool is that?*
- You can hear their reply:
- '*You did what?!'*
- Something tells me that Daniel did not need to encourage them too hard to pray that evening!

Chronological Order

Chapter		
1	Babylonian Captivity	606 B.C.
2	Nebuchadnezzar's Dream	604 B.C.
3	Nebuchadnezzar's Image	587 B.C.
4	Nebuchadnezzar's Pride	570-563 B.C.
7	The vision of the 4 beasts	552 B.C.
8	Ram and He-goat vision	550 B.C.
5	Babylon falls to Persians	539 B.C.
6	The Lions' Den	539 B.C.
9	Vision of seventy weeks	537 B.C.
10 -12	Closing visions	536 B.C.

Chronological Order

	Date B.C.	Approx. Chapter Date	Daniel's Approx. Age	Servitude (Jer 29:10)	Desolations (Jer 25:11)	Babylonian Kings King Neb's reign	Judah's Kings	
1st Seige of Jerusalem	606	Chapter 1	14	1		Ascension Year	Jehoiakim 3rd Year	2 Chron 36:5-7
	605		15	2		1st Year	4th Year	(Also Dan 1:1)
	604	Chapter 2	16	3		2nd Year	5th Year	
	603		17	4		3rd Year	6th Year	
	602		18	5		4th Year	7th Year	
	601		19	6		5th Year	8th Year	
	600		20	7		6th Year	9th Year	
	599		21	8		7th Year	10th Year	
	598		22	9		8th Year	11th Year	
2nd Seige of Jerusalem	597		23	10		9th Year	Zedekiah 1st Yr	2 Kings 24:18-20
(Ezekiel taken captive)	596		24	11		10th Year	2nd Year	
	595		25	12		11th Year	3rd Year	
	594		26	13		12th Year	4th Year	
	593		27	14		13th Year	5th Year	
	592		28	15		14th Year	6th Year	
	591		29	16		15th Year	7th Year	
	590		30	17		16th Year	8th Year	
3rd Seige begins	589		31	18	Desolations	17th Year	9th Year	2 Kings 24:1-7
	588		32	19	Begin	18th Year	10th Year	
3rd Seige of Jerusalem	587	Chapter 3	33	20	1	19thYear	11th Year	2 Chron 36:11-21
(City & Temple destroyed)	586		34	21	2	20th Year		

An Act of Defiance?

- If this event occurred in 587 B.C. Daniel and his friends would have been around 33 years old.
- This was the year Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple
- Zedekiah had been carried away captive to Babylon and Israel were ‘no longer’
- Even the mighty Assyrians had not been able to do this!
- Maybe Nebuchadnezzar could be more than just the head of gold…
- Maybe his kingdom could be eternal!

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

Daniel 2

Gold	**Babylon** 606 BC – 539 BC
Silver	**Persia** 539 BC – 332 BC
Brass	**Greece** 332 BC – 68 BC
Iron	**Rome I** 68 BC – ?
Iron + Clay	**"Rome II"**

A Vote of Confidence?

- A revolt in 596 B.C. may have set the stage for the wide scale reaffirmation and swearing allegiance in support of Nebuchadnezzar.
  - Cuneiform tablets in British Museum
- Jeremiah 51:59 records a visit Zedekiah had to make to Babylon at this time

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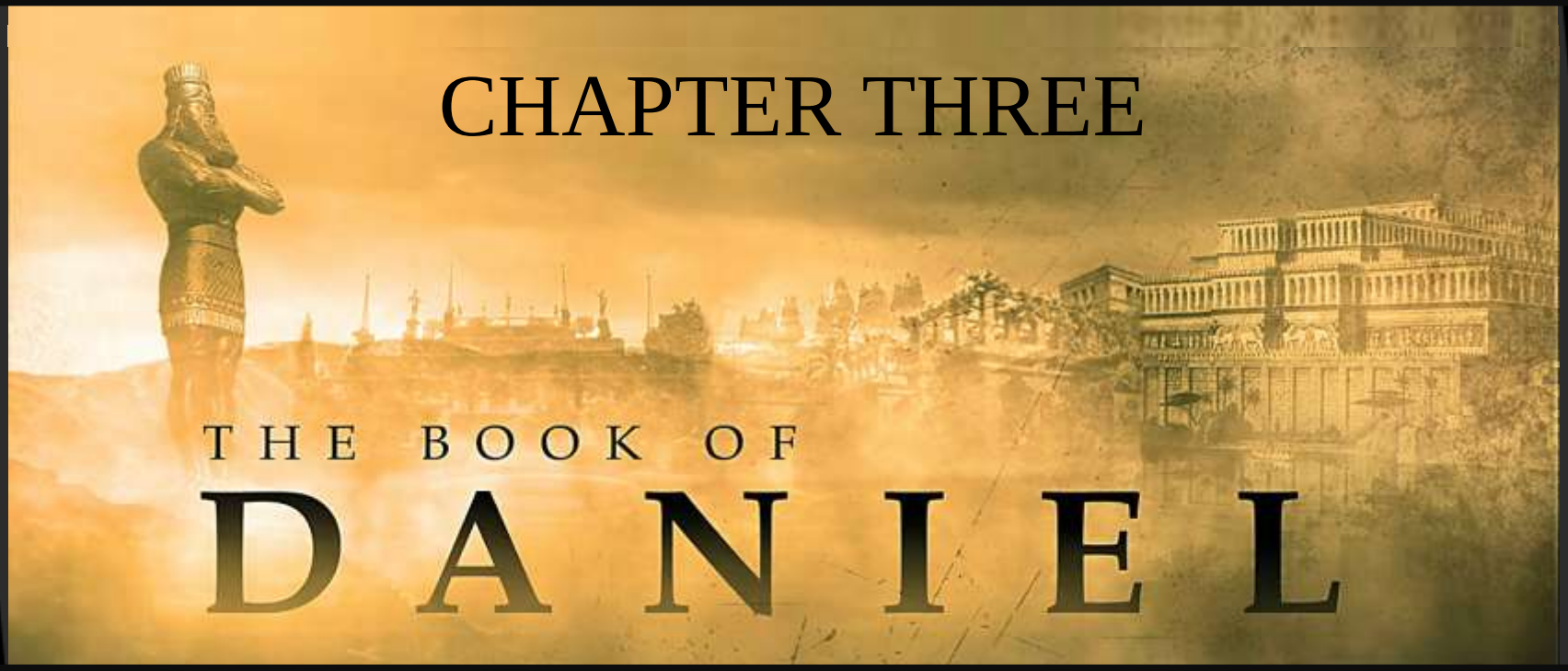
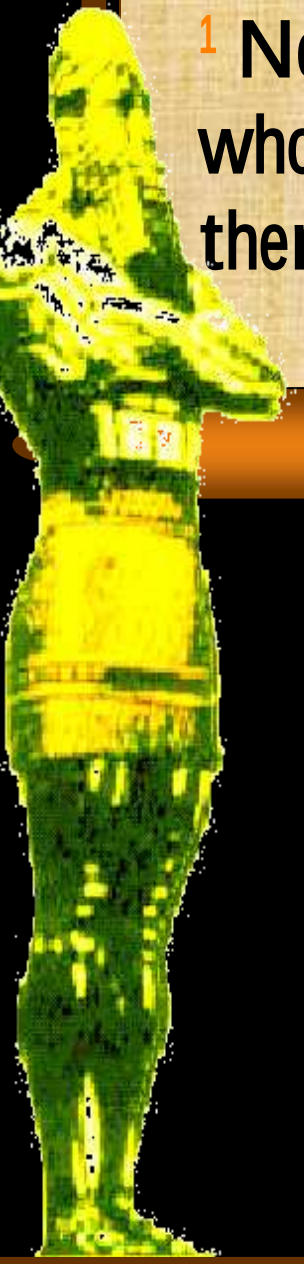
CHAPTER THREE



...a verse by verse study

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.

Daniel 3:1



All Gold

6 x 60 cubits high

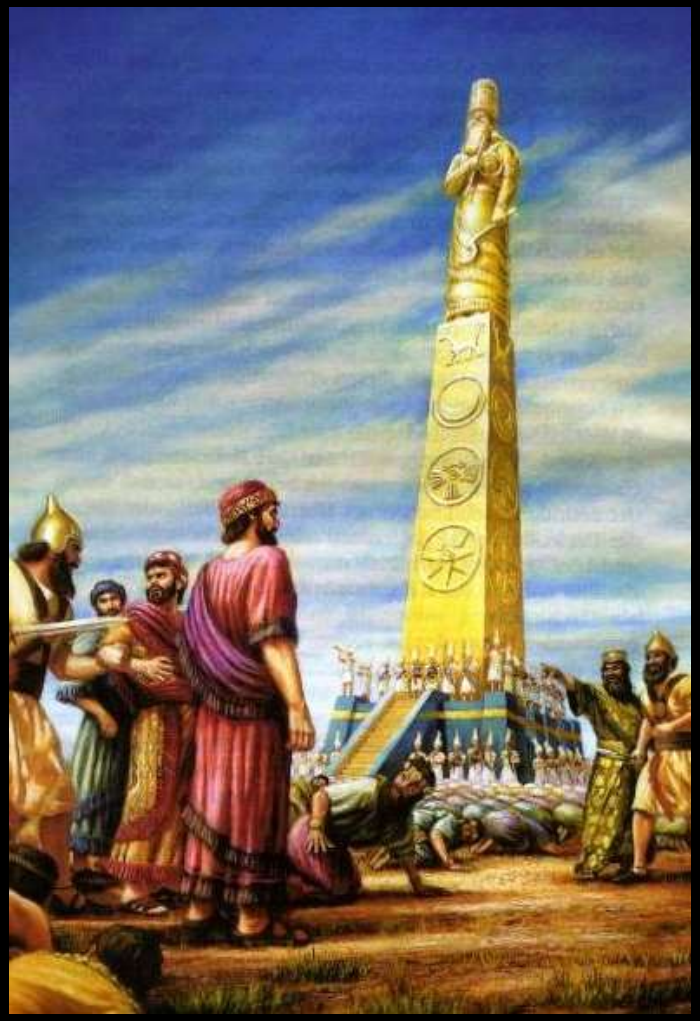
9 x 90 ft high

Historical Confirmation

- Archaeologists have unearthed a 45ft square & 20ft high ‘base’ in the plain of Dura which many now believe could have been the base for this image, and would have been clearly visible from the walls of Babylon
- A furnace has also been discovered at this site

Historical Confirmation

- The dimensions of this statue are more like the Obelisks of Egypt, and it may well have been that on one of his expeditions Nebuchadnezzar would have seen these erected to immortalise Egyptian Pharaohs and deities and thus became part of the inspiration for him wanting to build one himself.



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.
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.

Daniel 3:2-3

Nebuchadnezzar's Idol

- There were about 100 provinces in Babylon at this time meaning that anywhere from 200,000 to 300,000 people would have gathered for this 'grand unveiling'.
- The fact that we have the same phrase repeated in v2&3 suggests that as Daniel is recording this event, he is copying the decree that had been written by the king
  - or maybe a decree that was written <u>for</u> the king!

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.

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.

Daniel 3:2-3

4 Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded,
O people, nations, and languages,
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:
6 And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall
the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery
furnace.

Daniel 3:4-6

- Burning to death was the common mode of execution in Babylon

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.

Daniel 3:7

- All that is except for three Hebrew men!
- Where was Daniel?

Music to Accompany Idolatry?

- Music and idolatry have long been close companions.
- Satan appears to have been the worship leader in heaven (see Ezekiel 28:13-15).
  - It would seem that he has a great understanding of how powerful and manipulative music can be.
- Music is a gift from God and is intended to accompany our praise to Him
- …yet it can be used for evil
  - Consider the lust, violence and immorality that is communicated to young people through music.
- Satan always distorts what God has made good

Babylon & Music

- From what we know of history, the Babylonians had a love for music.
- This is prophetically seen in Psalm 137:1-4:
- *"By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the LORD's song in a strange land?"*

8 Wherefore at that time certain Chaldeans came near,
and accused the Jews.
9 They spake and said to the king Nebuchadnezzar,
O king, live for ever.
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:
11 And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth, that he
should be cast into the midst of a burning fiery
furnace.

Daniel 3:8-11

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.

Daniel 3:12

- Note the charge is threefold:
- 1) They do not regard Nebuchadnezzar
- 2) They do not serve (past tense) Babylon's gods
  - This was not the first time!
- 3) They will not bow down to this statue

Religious Hatred?

- Those who stand for truth are seen as an irritant to a society that wants to be free from moral constraints.
- Jesus Himself confirmed this:

If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

John 15:18-25

Religious Hatred?

Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin. He that hateth me hateth my Father also.

John 15:18-25

Religious Hatred?

If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.

John 15:18-25

Religious Hatred?

- Paul reiterated this to Timothy:

Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

2 Timothy 3:12

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

Daniel 3:13-14

- Why rage & fury?
- Was it because he realised he'd been played?
- Rather than just throw them in the furnace they are called to give account (by name!)

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?

Daniel 3:15

- Is Nebuchadnezzar looking for a way out?
  - "This is what I am asking you to do!"
- He is certainly giving them another chance
- "Who is that God?..." - he will soon discover!

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

Daniel 3:16

- The Aramaic word that the KJV translates as ‘careful’ is ‘chashach’ (khash-akh') meaning to ‘have need of’.
- Lit. ‘we have no need to answer you, we are not accountable to you but to God’.
- It also implies that they were not anxious about this situation.

Acts 20:24

But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

Acts 20:24

Daniel 1:8

- These men had purposed in their hearts.
- They were not going to be defiled!
- *"Purpose is something that comes through meditation, you have to think about what you're going to do if you face this circumstance or that circumstance. And when you are prepared and the circumstance happens, you react to that which you have meditated on. So if you meditate on that which will not be helpful, then when you are in that potentially compromising situation you will do that which you have meditated on".* (Ron Matsen)
  - This is precisely why we are told to be transformed by the renewing of our minds (Rom 12:1-2), and to 'think on these things' Phil 4:8), setting our affection on the things above (Col 3:2).

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.
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.

Daniel 3:17-18

- This is a sublime declaration of faith
- Just like Job “Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him” Job 13:15

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.
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.

Daniel 3:17-18

- In scripture, those who have made great professions of faith have often had that profession tested to breaking point.
- It is the heating up and subsequent hammering of steel that gives it its strength.

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.
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.

Daniel 3:17-18

- It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes." (Psalm 118:4-9)
- Jesus said "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." (Matt 10:28)

But if not…

In World War II when the British and allied forces had been pushed back by the German army to the beaches of Dunkirk, France, being trapped by the English Channel on one side and the approaching German's on the other, they sent a simple three word message back home: "But if not". Immediately this was recognised as being a quote from the book of Daniel and was understood to mean that the trapped British troops would wait to be saved, but if not, they would die fighting and standing up for their cause. This then led to the famous Dunkirk evacuations where hundreds of military, merchant and private fishing boats set sail across the Channel and dramatically rescued in the region of 350,000 British and allied soldiers. It has been said that if such a message were to be sent today, the soldiers would perish, as no one knows what the Bible says anymore.

19 Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage 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.

Daniel 3:19

- Now Nebuchadnezzar is cross!
- He is being publicly humiliated by three of his top officials
- All eyes are on him to see what he will do
  - The power of peer pressure and expectation!

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.
21 Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

Daniel 3:20-21

- Usually victims were stripped to humiliate them, yet here the king is so cross he just wants them thrown in.
- Hosen = undergarments, Hats = a turban of some description; other garments = robes of office; coats = usual outer garments.

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

Daniel 3:22-23

- This give us an idea just how hot this furnace may have been. From the furnaces that have been found in this region, it would probably be that the opening was at the top with a viewing area to the side, thus as the ‘lid’ is lifted, the intense heat was just too much for these mighty men who were overcome by the flames.

Trial by Fire!

- At this point we know the story and are expectantly awaiting for the victory!
- However Hananiah, Azariah and Mishael did not know what was about to happen.
- What right do we have to question God’s judgment when God is infinite in knowledge and understanding and we so limited and finite?

Trial by Fire!

My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting *nothing*".

James 1:2-4

- This is beautiful to know, that God wants to make us perfect and complete, lacking nothing.
- If He has to knock off some rough edges here and there, He is doing it out of love and compassion.

Trial by Fire!

- Yes these things can be painful at the time;
- Consider Mary and Martha:
- Jesus let their brother, Lazarus, die, not just so He could do a miracle (John 11:40)
- …but so that they would believe in Jesus and therefore they themselves would never die (John 11:25)
- …an infinitely greater gift than seeing their brother raised.

24 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonied, 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.
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.

Daniel 3:24-25

Son of God?

- The Aramaic actually says ‘the son of the gods’ - Plural.
- The Aramaic word used is equivalent to the Hebrew ‘Eloheim’ (Gods) and is not the same as ‘Bar Eloheim’ (sons of God) usually translated ‘angels’.
- Thus this is seen to be an Old Testament appearance of the 2nd Person of the Trinity – our Lord Jesus Christ
  - Referred to by scholars as a Christophany
  - See also Joshua 5:13-15 / Judges 13:3-22

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.

Daniel 3:26

- All the people who had gathered on the plain of Dura are now watching something completely different than they were expecting to watch – yet this was what God had gathered them all there to see!

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.

Daniel 3:26

- Nebuchadnezzar thought they were gathered to worship him, but God had a different idea!
  - Other people may look in at us in the midst of our time of tribulation and see that we are ‘not harmed’ by the flames.

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.

Daniel 3:26

- Only three come out of the furnace. Where's the forth one?
- He stays in there waiting for you, so that you know that when you find yourself in the furnace, He will be with you. – Hebrews 13:5

In the Midst of the Storm

- The wind was actually boisterous, the waves were actually high, but Peter did not see them at first. He did not reckon with them, he simply recognised his Lord, and stepped out in recognition of Him and walked on the water. Then he began to reckon with the actual things, and down he went instantly. Why could not our Lord have enabled him to walk at the bottom of the waves as well as on the top of them? Neither could be done saving by recognition of the Lord Jesus.

In the Midst of the Storm

- We step right out on God over some things, then self-consideration enters in and down we go. If you are recognising your Lord, you have no business with where He engineers your circumstances. The actual things are, but immediately you look at them you are overwhelmed, you cannot recognise Jesus, and the rebuke comes: Wherefore didst thou doubt?” Let actual circumstances be what they may, keep recognising Jesus, maintain complete reliance on Him.

- Oswald Chambers, My Utmost for His Highest

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.

Daniel 3:27

- God’s deliverance is complete – not even the smell of smoke!

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.

Daniel 3:28

- Romans 12:1-2

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.

Daniel 3:29

- He still hasn't quite got it! He recognised that God can interpret dreams, now he recognises that God can deliver; but he still has not understood that God is in complete control.
- Being wowed by signs and wonders and not seeking the Source is a common mistake!

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

Daniel 3:30

The Missing Element:

Where's Daniel?

Why Wasn't Daniel in the Furnace?

1. Did Daniel yield to the king's challenge?
   - Never!
2. Was Daniel was exempted from accusation by his enemies?
   - The Satanic intent behind this precludes this!
3. Was Daniel 'out of the land', on an errand for the king?
   - Most likely. And Daniel's absence may well have given rise to the Chaldeans seizing this moment to try to implicate his 3 friends in treason

Daniel 3

A *Remez**?

* A hint of something deeper

A Model of the Tribulation?

- Here we have a world leader setting up a statue to be worshiped by all
- All who do not worship will be put to death
  - The fire is 7x (hotter)
- Jews are persecuted but supernaturally protected by God!
- Daniel ‘a friend of God’ is absent from this scene
  - Is Daniel a type of the Church (we are also called His friends) who will be removed by the Holy Spirit so we will not have to endure the Tribulation?

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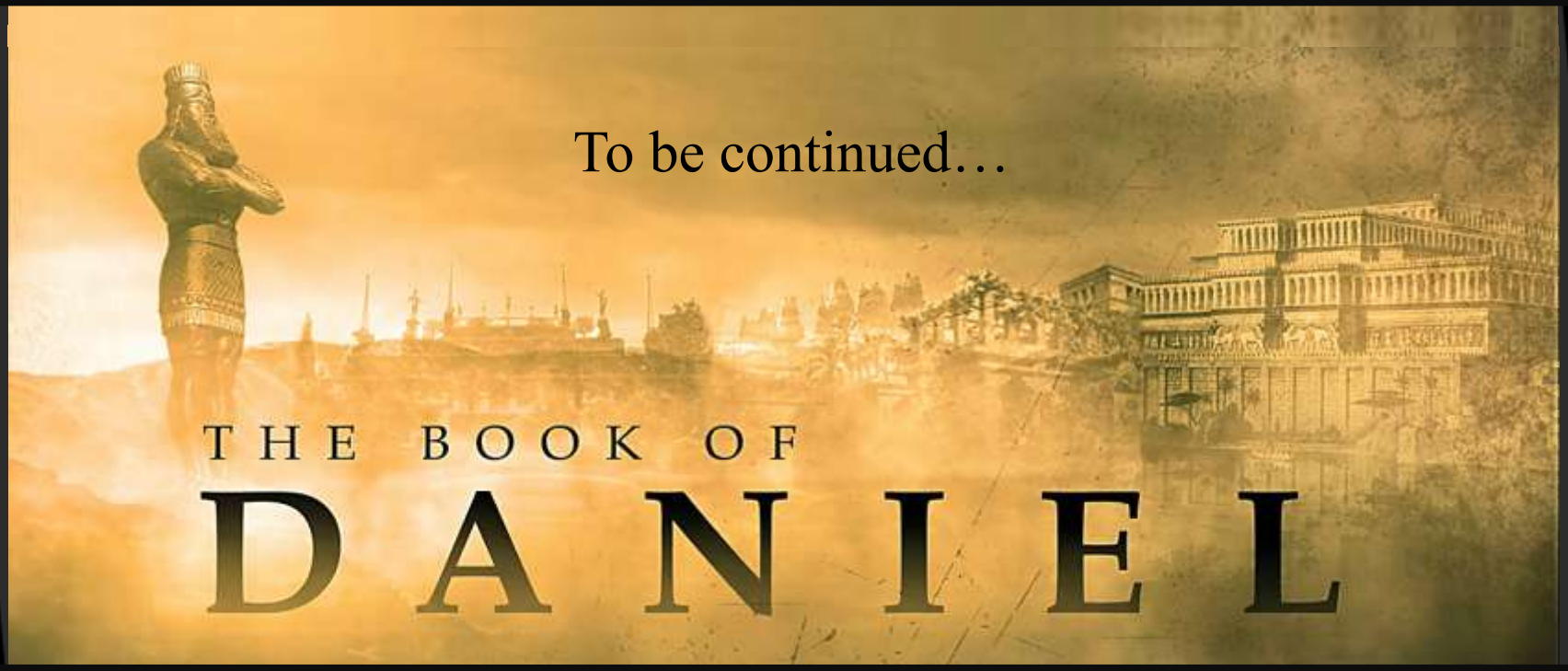

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