

Doing hard things well

Daniel 3:1-30

- Chapter three is an interesting time period because this happens after Daniel and his friends have established themselves as Godly men, and have been given high government positions, even though they are living in the midst of an ungodly nation. So its been some time since Nebuchadnezzar had his dream and after Daniel's interpretation declared "your God is the God of gods, The Lord of kings, and a Revealer of secrets" now he shows his true heart as he constructs an image of gold.

V1-30

- It's been said that the greatest test of faith is time, as time will eventually reveal what's in a person's heart. **V1-6** Nebuchadnezzar decides to build an enormous image of gold, ninety feet high, nine feet wide, what a sight to behold especially in that time there was nothing like it. Then at the dedication of this gigantic image, he tells everyone that when they hear a certain tune coming from specific instruments they are to fall down and worship this image, failure to do so will bring certain death.
- What happened to Daniel's God being the only God? I tell you what happened time, once time elapsed Nebuchadnezzar thought his reign and authority will never end, look at my Kingdom it isn't getting weaker its growing stronger, and to commemorate this, I'll erect this statue in defiance of what Daniel's God has said about my kingdom ending, and make everyone bow down to it, when I say, to prove my point.
- To show how serious I am about this if anyone decides to defy my command and bend the knee will die a horrifying death of being burned alive. Now that's a powerful threat issued by a man who doesn't take no for an answer, for in doing so Nebuchadnezzar has regarded the refusal to worship this image as treason.
- **V7-12** after hearing the decree Nebuchadnezzar puts the people to the test and they fall down and worship the image just as he commanded. It's interesting that Nebuchadnezzar chose music as the means for false worship, before he fell scripture says lucifer (Satan) played a role in the worship in heaven > **Ezek 28:13**.

- God created music and ordained it as a means of praise to Him, but Satan has turned it into a tool for idolatry, as it's a constant battlefield where you're either motivated to fall down and glorify The Lord, or fall down and follow the flesh, and often because of a lack of discernment many cannot tell the difference between the two. Now the story gets really intense as a showdown is about to happen.
- **V12** says the Chaldeans they were the slicksters who no doubt were jealous of the positions Danel and his friends held notice three men in the crowd who stand tall while others are falling down. It's great when you live in such a way that unbelievers know your testimony without you opening your mouth, this tells us that well before the statue was ever built these three men had already demonstrated that they only serve One God Jehovah and this is not Him.
- **V13-15** upon hearing that anyone would defy his command Nebuchadnezzar is furious, we already have seen what a temper he has > Prov 16:32- the person who can control himself is stronger than a conqueror of cities. But in giving the three Hebrew men an opportunity to get on his good graces shows that he did have a measure of respect for them.
- The problem is he doesn't have it for The Lord, as he knows why their not bowing and makes reference to Him not being able to save them from him. Again this shows he has completely disregarded his previous statement of respect and honor for The Lord after the dream incident, now his pride and arrogance is back to thinking that he is god on earth, and his false gods are what is keeping him in power.
- **V16-18** now most people's self preservation gene would have kicked in and rationalized that they can do more alive than dead and bowed down in compromise. But these three men are living by faith and not by their feelings, they answer that they have no need to defend themselves, don't have to consult with each other, they are confident that their God is able to save them from his hand, but being men of faith doesn't mean they are men of presumption, if its not God's will then so be it.
- **V19-23** this is not the answer King Nebuchadnezzar wanted to hear, now he was already mad, now he is hot, and so he tells them to heat the furnace seven times hotter than usual, so much so that the men who threw the three Hebrews in the fire were scorched themselves. **Heb 11:36-37** tell us that living by faith does not insulate us from pain and suffering, sometimes it will lead us to it.

- **V24-25** this is the beautiful part of suffering for The Lord He will never leave us or forsake us but be right there with us, as He is the fourth Man in the fire. The only thing affected by the fire were the ropes that bound the men, now they are walking around free as if they are in a palace and not a furnace. In the Septuagint the Greek translation of the Hebrew text it says the Hebrew men were singing while in the fire.
- **V26-27** the tone of the king changes when he sees that the fire has no power over the three Hebrew men, notice the guards that threw them in were quickly consumed but God's men are preserved. Again God is showing Nebuchadnezzar and the people of Babylon that He is The One True God, and this is what He wants to do with His people when we trust and live for Him, to be a conduit for His power to flow through, sadly we keep getting in the way and blocking the flow.
- **V28-30** we'd rather get out of a problem or situation that's hard than stay in it and allow God's power and glory to show itself as a testimony to those around us. Notice their hair not singed, clothes have no smell of fire, no distractions, which allow them to see > The Power of God.
- Look at the effect it has on him, as he is back to lifting up The Name of The Lord, and declares no one should not speak ill or against The God of these Hebrew men or there homes will be destroyed.as there is no God Who delivers like this. The Devil tempts us to **destroy our faith**, but God tests us to **develop our faith**, because a faith that can't **be tested** can't **be trusted** > **1Pet 1:6-9**.