

**Daniel 3**  
**God Will Deliver You From That Fiery Trial**  
**Pastor JD Farag**

KAPONO: Would you join me in a word of prayer? Father, we rejoice in Your name, Lord, this evening. We thank You so much for this time that we can gather. Lord, would You speak to us, Lord? I pray that tonight would be an encouragement to us. Lord, that we would have the faith that these three young men had. So speak to us in Your word. I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

PASTOR JD: Amen and amen. Good evening to you all. How are you doing?

[ Congregation responds ]

That wasn't very convincing. But you can go ahead and sit down now, I guess. No, glad you're here. Those of you joining us online, we're so glad that you are. I've really been looking forward to tonight.

*Daniel Chapter 3.* It probably goes without saying, but the chapter before us tonight is among one of the most well known in all of Scripture, and this for a number of very good reasons, chief of which is that there is just so much in just this one chapter by way of its prophetic implication and also its personal application. I will do my best to not give you what I'll call scriptural whiplash, going back and forth between the two, but I don't want for us to miss the main takeaways.

So there's going to be — and we're going to pray in a moment — but there's going to be a balance, a blend, I guess, for lack of a better term, between the two, which really are harmonious in the sense that they are in concert together, one with the other, meaning the prophetic implication in concert with the personal application. It's woven together, it gels together, it blends together, and goes together.

So I'll do my best. We won't go back and forth too much or too fast, so again, I don't give you whiplash. And if I do, I just apologize in advance. But again, I don't want for us to miss this, namely that of knowing that by faith God will deliver you from that fiery trial you're in.

But here's the thing. It may not be in the way that you think, or when you think, or how you think. And that's the problem, isn't it? So let's pray and let's get right to it. We've got a lot to get to. If you would join with me.

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Father, thank You so, so, so much, Lord, there's so much here. And I would just ask that the Holy Spirit would prompt me accordingly, so that we don't leave here tonight having missed anything that You have for us here tonight.

So Lord, would You, as only You can, blend just the powerful prophecy and the typology here with the personal application as it relates to those fiery trials in our lives. And so, Lord, thank You in advance for what You're going to do. And thank You, Lord, that You are able and will always deliver us in Your way, in Your time, and for Your glory. So Lord, bless our time together tonight in this amazing chapter, we pray. In Jesus' name. Amen.

All right, let's roll up our sleeves. *Verse 1, “Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold...”*

Stop! We need to borrow from *Chapter 2*. This is going to be germane to our understanding of the details in *Chapter 3*, one of which is this image of gold, all gold. Now, why is that important?

Because in *Chapter 2*, Nebuchadnezzar had a dream that only Daniel could tell him what the dream was and then interpret it. And it was of an image with only a head of gold. So what does Nebuchadnezzar do in defiance and rebellion against God? He makes the whole image gold.

There's one thing that's going to come out of this tonight, and we're going to see it here in just a moment, just in *verse 1*. It's the typology of the Antichrist. Let me explain. The Antichrist is not just against Christ, Antichrist, in defiance of Christ, but subtly and satanically in the place of Christ.

In other words, Nebuchadnezzar is putting this statue all of gold in place of the statue that God gave him this dream of that his kingdom, though gold, would not last forever. So what he's doing is, “instead of.” He's placing — replacing — that image with this image of all gold as if to say, “my kingdom will last forever.”

Now look at this detail. Right out of the chute, this image “**...whose height was 60 cubits, and its width 6 cubits. [Don't get ahead of me] He set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.**”

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Okay, just again, *verse 1*. Bear with me. You can go to modern-day Iraq, to this location, then called the plain of Dura, in ancient Babylon, which is approximately 50 miles away from the capital of modern-day Iraq, the city of Baghdad. This is where this all took place.

And get this, you can go to this location, and you will find the archeological finds of a colossal statue with a huge platform in this expansive plain, which it would have needed to be, this flat, vast plain, and right smack in the middle are the archeological finds of a colossal statue, exactly as we're told here in *Daniel 3*.

How chicken skin is that? I love it when God does that! You know by the way, just parenthetically, let me say you know when archeologists make a find and discover some ancient civilization? Do you know where they go to authenticate or validate or even understand what they just found? The Bible.

They don't go to the Book of Mormon. No, I mean that —no, for real — because do you know that there are no — there is absolutely zero, zilch, nada, nothing found archaeologically anywhere in the world that provides evidence that there was ever any people called the Nephites. You will not find any authentication. Was that a word? Authentication. I'm sorry. I was blending two words together for you, two for the price of one. You will not find it.

But these are not Christians. These are secularists. These are scientists. These are archeologists. They are geologists. And they find something. And they go, wow, this is really ancient. I wonder what it is. I don't know; let's go to the Bible and find out. Oh, this was in *Daniel Chapter 3*.

That was that gold image that Nebuchadnezzar made. It was right here. This is the plain of Dura, right? Get your GPS out. Yeah, right here. That's it! *Verse 2*. **“And King Nebuchadnezzar sent word to gather together the satraps, the administrators, the governors, the counselors, the treasures, the judges, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces to come to the dedication of the image which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.**

**So [Verse 3] the satraps, the administrators, the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces gathered together for the**

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**dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. And they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up.”**

This might seem like repetitive, even redundant detail, but it's here for a reason. You'll see why in a moment. Now I want you to — I know I probably say this every week. Please don't tire of me saying it. But let's use our God-given imagination. Let's put ourselves there.

Let's take a trip to Iraq. I wouldn't recommend it, but let's just do it tonight in our Bible study. We're there. I want to try, in the use of our God-given imagination, to give you kind of a perspective of just what this would have looked like.

First of all, you've got a huge number of very important officials. I mean, I'm just reading this list here, and I mean, how many thousands of people are just included in this list? This does not even include the masses of the people there in Babylon at that time.

And this plain — I just — by the way, the Indy 500 — I believe it's the largest attended sporting event in the world. An estimated 350,000 people are there for the Indy 500. And when you see these aerial views, it's just a sea of humanity. 350,000 people.

Now, you know those old black and white, films of Hitler before a sea of humanity? I mean, as far as the eye can see, I mean, all you — all you see are — you know which ones I'm talking about, right? And here's Hitler at this very high podium, Satanically possessed, to be sure, and he is talking, and these people are all just — I mean, you just — you see just this sea of people. That's what you would see here.

Now, again, this is going to be germane to our understanding of what we're about to see.

**Verse 4. “Then a herald cried aloud: “To you it is commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages...”**

Now *verse 5*, if you don't mind, I want to read from the King James Version 1900. Okay? And there's a reason. **“To you, it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages [Verse 5, King James Version] that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer...”**

Six instruments. Now why did I veer off from the New King James and go to the King James? Because this is in Aramaic, like we talked about last week. And three of the six instruments

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were Greek instruments that have been given Aramaic names. And it's for this reason that we see a variation in the translations when it comes to the listings of these specific instruments.

But I want to point out that there are six instruments with an image that is 60x6 and 6 instruments. Now hang on to that. This is Revelation, the image of the beast, the demanding to worship the image of the beast, and the image is that of a man and the number of a man. And the man's number, by the way, is six. So his number **“...let him who is wise calculate.”**

In other words, there's some calculations that have to be done in order to determine and discern who the Antichrist is, but he will have in his name the number 666, as we see here with this typology. Okay, hang on to that.

**Verse 6. “...and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast [Notice this word] immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.”**

Okay, I have a question. If somebody doesn't bow down — we got the sea of humanity — they don't bow down and worship once the music starts playing, which, by the way, the power of music — it's hypnotic, it's melodic. It is so powerful. God created us for music. And music can change the brain and the mood. And you can have an experience.

And you can go to churches today. You'll have no problem finding one, by the way. And it's all the experience because of the music. And you're moved, but you're not fed. It moves the soul, but it doesn't feed the spirit.

Never underestimate the power of music. I won't go into it. We have before. Just factor that in because imagine that many people with that orchestra perfectly played, doubtless. How incredibly powerful would that have been?

So I have a question. My question is: If those who don't fall down and worship are going to be immediately cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace, wouldn't that suggest that the fiery furnace is already a blazing? Because it wouldn't say “immediately.” It would mean — it would rather say instead — they will be cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace as soon as we can get it all set up and heat it up.

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No. Again, this is where our God-given imagination comes in very handy because I'm looking at this huge — think about a nine-story-tall building, and this huge plain, and this sea of humanity. And this thing would be, I mean, you're looking at this thing and then — but I just got done being told that there's a fiery furnace. I'm looking around going, where is it?

Oh, there it is at the ready. Okay, that's called incentive. That's called motivation. It's also called a threat. And in the mind of most, this is a no-brainer. So wait a minute. All I got to do — I got two choices here. I can just — I mean, it's just one time. Just bow down, just a little pinch to Caesar. Caesar is Lord. That's okay. Just bow down, worship the image 60 cubits by 6 with 6 instruments. That's okay. Just do it.

So just do that, or B: Die over there. Because it's already heated up and it's ready to go because immediately you'll be thrown in there. And in order to be immediately thrown in the midst of the burning — And don't picture a beautiful, cozy, warm fireplace here, right?

I mean, this was a huge — (Chuckling) this was — you just don't want to go inside of this thing. Okay? So can you imagine? I mean, how powerful is this moment? And this really happened. And again, we have archeological proof as such. We don't need it. I mean, God said it. That settles it. It happened.

All right. *Verse 7.* **“So at that time when all the people heard the sound of the horn, flute, harp, and lyre in symphony with all kinds of music, all the people, nations, and languages fell down and worshiped the gold image which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.”**

Okay. Back to the black and white Hitler, Nazi, sea of humanity films. Okay, can you imagine? The music's played. Everybody bows down. You see all of that sea of humanity. Boom — go down — except for three.

You think they're going to stick out? And how about the pressure on them? I mean, you know those experiments — we were just talking about this in our pastor's meeting — you know the experiments where they would take a classroom of students and they would just, you know, experiment on the power of peer pressure.

So the teacher, by way of an example, and there's variations of this experiment — true story, by the way — would say two — write on the board — two plus two equals five. And all of the students in on this experiment would raise their hand, except for the one on whom the

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experiment was. He's looking around at all of his classmates, and they're all raising their hand. Two plus two equals five. He's going, uh, no, it doesn't.

Could you imagine the — I mean, I'll speak for myself, okay? Because I know you guys are way more spiritual than I am. But I would be just thinking to myself: I don't want to be the only one. I mean, everybody's — because they were instructed to just look at you like, why aren't you raising your hand?

I'm not raising my hand because — I mean, call me crazy — but two plus two does not equal five. And all of you are raising your hand, and I'm the only one. And I'm sticking out and standing out and standing up for the truth that two plus two still equals four. And they're staring at you, giving you a stink eye. And you're like (Groaning)

But you don't. That's Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, as we're going to see times how many tens or even hundreds of thousands of people. So down they go, worshiping the gold image.

**“Therefore [Verse 8] at that time certain Chaldeans came forward [Remember these guys?] came forward and accused the Jews.”**

I think they still got a bone to pick with these guys because remember, now, these were the guys that were able to, with Daniel, not only explain the dream but interpret the dream. And then they were also the ones responsible for being vegetarians now and no longer being able to eat, you know, prime rib and all of the delicacies, so...

But they also got promoted. And this is a textbook case of jealousy and resentment because they got promoted. And they're not even Chaldeans. They're Jews! And Nebuchadnezzar promoted these guys. And now, here we all bow down, but they didn't. So they start now to accuse them.

And verse 9, **“They spoke and said to King Nebuchadnezzar, [And I want you to notice something here] “O king, live forever!”**

Oh, how original. Of course you're going to say that to the king. **“You, O king, have made a decree that everyone who hears the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, shall fall down and worship the gold image; and**

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**whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.” [Yeah?] [And?] [Well?] [And verse 12] There are certain Jews [Watch this] whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego; these men, O king, have not paid due regard to you. They do not serve your gods or worship the gold image which you have set up.”**

In other words, you gave them the promotion that we should have had. And now this is how they thank you, O king, live forever!

[ Laughter ]

Uh, you promoted — you gave the promotion to the wrong guy. O king, live forever! We should have got that promotion. We're Chaldeans: they're Jews, and you promoted them. You know how it is in the corporate arena when somebody less qualified than you and certainly younger than you — and oh, by the way, it is possible, and there's some debate on this, that between *Chapter 2* and *Chapter 3*, some 11 years has gone by.

So if Daniel was 15 and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, similar and close in age in *Chapter 2*, they're now 30, early 30s if 11 years — no, that's not right.

Wait, give me a do-over. Let me have a do-over on that. It's been a long week again. It's only Thursday. So they're in their late 20s. Okay, good. We're okay? You forgive me for my — okay — my miscalculation? I will never be able to figure out who the Antichrist is, nor do I wish to, nor do I have to.

So anyway, so they're in their 20s now. They're still young. Now, why do I mention that? Because you gotta know these Chaldeans that are accusing these Jews and jealous of these Jews who got the promotion they thought they should have got are older. No, let's go back into the workplace just to put it into perspective.

Here you are; you've been working for this guy for 15 years, and here comes a young whippersnapper, this little fancy pants, hotshot, young buckaroo. That's not a bad word. That's, I think, “little boy.” Anyway, Spanish, whew! Better be careful with those words.



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I mean, you know — and they get the job you should have got. You got more seniority, you're more qualified, and you've got longer tenure than that — he's not even of your kind. He's from out of town. He's not even local, you know.

[ Laughter ]

Did I take it too far? You got the picture, right? I'm just saying this is how they viewed these guys. They hated them. They despised them. And now they've got the perfect opportunity to get their jobs, which they should have got in the first place.

Listen, this is, just for lack of a better word, chutzpah. You know what chutzpah is? I mean, this takes a lot of nerve. Certain Jews that you promoted over us! O king, live forever! And this is how they repay you? They have not paid due regard to you, bowing down to your image. And it works.

*Verse 13.* Oh my goodness. **“Then Nebuchadnezzar, in rage and fury, gave the command [Now this is interesting] to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. So they brought these men before the king.”**

Now why is that interesting? Because listen, if it weren't for these guys being who they were, and Nebuchadnezzar knew who they were, they would not have been brought to the king. They would have been, remember, immediately thrown into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. So what's happening here?

Well, Nebuchadnezzar remembers these guys. Wait a minute. I did promote these guys, and I also know why I promoted these guys and why I didn't promote you guys. So you know what? I don't want to throw them into the furnace. Not yet. I want to give them a second chance. God's got His hand all over this.

So here they come. Could you imagine? Don't imagine them trembling in fear of Nebuchadnezzar. Because if that were the case, they would have just bowed down and cowered and faltered out of fear of what would happen if they didn't. No, they don't fear him. They fear God. So I imagine them — and I don't want to get too — to the other extreme on this, but I imagine them walking in to the king with their head held up high because they just obeyed God against all odds and tremendous pressure. So they're brought to Nebuchadnezzar.

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**“And Nebuchadnezzar [Verse 14] spoke, saying to them, is it true?”**

Now, to his credit, he's actually asking them what every single one of us should ask when there's been an accusation or an allegation made. I think about the scriptures in the New Testament and actually replete throughout Scripture that everything is to be established in the presence of two or more witnesses. Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless you have two or more witnesses.

So he's not just taking these guys' word for it because he knows they have an ulterior motive. They want these Jews out so they can get in. So of course they're going to — again, Nebuchadnezzar is not stupid, you know. You don't just become the most powerful man in the known world by being stupid. This guy's smart. I just wanted to say it one more time, is all.

[ Laughter ]

I won't say it anymore, I hope. So to his credit, this is wisdom. I want to hear it from the horse's mouth, as we say. Is it true, you guys? **“Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, that you do not serve [Listen] my gods or worship the gold image which I have set up?”**

This is likely, it's believed, to be the god Marduk, the god of war that this image was made of. But the reality is, is that Nebuchadnezzar — this is not an image of his god because Nebuchadnezzar in his own eyes is his own god. So he's asking them, and this is to his credit, is it true? Before I meet out, just — well in this case — unjust judgment and punishment, I want to make sure that I'm not sentencing an innocent man, as it were.

Now here's where the second chance comes in. **“Now if you are ready at the time...”** [Let's do a do-over here]

I'll give you a second chance. This must be just an honest misunderstanding. Because you guys were the only three out of that whole sea of all that humanity that didn't bow down. There must have been a miscommunication here. So let's try this again.

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**“If you are ready at the time, you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre [*Is that liar or lyre? I don't care*] and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, and you fall down and worship the image which I have made, good!”**

Translated: It would be a good thing if you did. I'm going to give you another chance. I'm going to give you a do-over. It would probably be a good idea, if you know what I mean, if you just do this, okay? Are you ready? I like how he asked him, *verse 15* **“...if you are ready at the time.”**

Now, he goes on now; he's going to draw their attention away from the image to the fiery furnace. And he says, **“But if you do not worship, you shall be cast [*And here's that word again*] immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.”**

I imagine him pointing to it. And this is where it gets really interesting. This is Nebuchadnezzar asking Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, **“And who is the god who will deliver you from my hands?”** ('The Godfather' sounding voice)

And he said it just like that too.

[ Laughter ]

You're going to find out by the end of the chapter tonight, Neb.

*Verse 16.* I love this. **“Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego answered and said to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter.”**

Meaning: You're not going to change our minds. Don't get the orchestra. Don't waste your time. Don't bother. No need. No need.

**“If [*Verse 17*] that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king.”**

And they don't say, **“live forever.”** Did you catch that? Good. Wait. Woo! Talk about chutzpah! What? I would have loved to have been a fly on a camel close in proximity to this when it went down. Can you imagine what the look on his face was?

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You — wait. I'll give you — I'm giving you a second chance here! No, no, no need. No, I got the orchestra ready. All I have to do — I don't even have to snap my fingers. I just — like we do locally — just raise the eyebrow — And then they start playing. Go. You ready?

No, no. No need. No need. Why no need? Because **“our God.”** See, we're not going to disobey our God to obey you, who think you are God, or bow down and worship your god. No, we're going to obey our God.

So here's the thing. In the Book of Acts — and we've talked about this plenty times — when you're faced with a decision that requires you to disobey God in order to obey the government, guess who you're going to obey?

Well, I shouldn't make any assumptions, I suppose. I'm not talking about you, but I'm flabbergasted at what happened commencing four years ago. Oh, we're to obey the laws of the land. We have to obey the law of King Nebuchadnezzar. It is a law. It is an edict, and it is a command to bow down. And no, I cannot.

And by the way, they had already done this before with the whole food and delicacies offered to idols, and they refused to be bullied and bow and cower and falter to the demands of the king because it would mean they would disobey their God.

I want to mention something here just real quick, and then we'll move on. This is not something that they would have decided on in the moment. Too late.

I think of Joseph. He already in his heart, set his heart to obey God no matter what. So when Potiphar's wife seduces him, we're told, every day — when all of these things happen, he had already set his heart. His mind was already made up. It was immovable, unchangeable, non-negotiable.

And that's basically what they're saying, is King, dude, no! Nothing's going to change our minds. And here's why. Because no matter what happens, you could throw us into that barbecue pit all you want. At the end of all of this, we will be delivered from you. Ha! Whether we're torched to a crisp we're still delivered from you, by the way. Or not.

**“But if not...”** *[Now this is key]* God is able and can. That's not the question. The question is not: Can God? The question is: Will God? Is it God's will? Herein lies these first three words

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in *verse 18*. I hate to use the expression, but for lack of a better one, the key to understanding those times in our lives when we go through those very painful trials.

God can. But what's God's will? I know You can, God, but it's not "can You." Will you? **"And not my will, but Your will be done."** This is akin to Job who says, **"Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him."** And this is akin to Esther, who said, **"If I perish, I perish."**

But I'm going to praise the name of the Lord. I'm going to trust in the Lord. He will deliver me. I don't know how. I don't know the way. I don't know when. I just know that by faith He will deliver me. But if He — if not this way, He's still going to deliver me. And we're never going to bow down to your gods.

We're never going to give in. I — oh it would have — could you imagine how easy it would have been to just — just do it, will ya? Just do it. I mean, do you want to die? You have a death wish here? And what a way to die, by the way: Burned alive. Well, Nebuchadnezzar is not happy.

And we're told, *verse 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."**

Now this implies that prior, Nebuchadnezzar, who they had found favor in his eyes, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, was talking to them possibly in a very civil manner. You guys come on. Let's talk about this. Let's work this out, man. I'll give you another chance. I'm not going to throw you and torch you right away. I like you guys. I promoted you guys. So let's — let's work this out, you guys. Come on.

And so he's talking, you know, nice, play nice, play nice. He's talking nice. And then when they tell him that, he completely changes the expression on his face. And this, seven times? Can you, can you hang on to that now? So we've got three sixes and one seven. Are you okay with that?

**"And [Verse 20] he commanded certain mighty men of valor who were in his army to bind [Notice that word "bind "] Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, and cast them into the burning fiery furnace. Then [Verse 21] these men were bound in their coats, their trousers, their turbans, and their other garments."**

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TMI. This is immediately, remember? We're not getting them ready. We're just going to — whatever they're wearing. You're going to take the ropes, and you're going to bind them and tie them up.

And they “...were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Therefore *[Verse 22]* because the king's command was urgent, *[I want this done now]* and the furnace exceedingly hot, *[Because I want this thing turned up full blast, seven times hotter]* the flame *[Get this]* of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego.”

How would you like to have been on shift that day? I'm sorry if that's crass or crude, but these were real men, and this fire is — and this detail's included, I think, for us to fully grasp the intensity of this situation. And this fire's so hot that the guys that are binding them up and throwing them into the fire are burned alive on the spot. This thing is hot! Really hot!

“And *[Verse 23]* these three men, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego, fell down bound *[There's that word again]* into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.”

Now imagine this —again, our God-given imagination — so they're bound up. They can't move. They're picked up, they're carried by these guys who were fried on the spot, and they're thrown in, face down, bound into the fiery furnace.

Now, you would just think that they would say, okay, that's it. I mean, if the guys that threw them in there are dead and burned, I'm sure they're going to be burned to a crisp pretty quick too.

But then you've got *verse 24*, and there is some question on this because it would stand to reason that King Nebuchadnezzar watched instead of just getting up and, okay, they're there. Those guys are dead. Sorry. Got to get some guys to take their shift. And then he would just walk away. But he doesn't.

He must have been watching because we're told, “Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and he rose in haste *[Picture him getting up really quickly]* 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, Dat]*

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[ Laughter ]

**“True, O king.”** *[Live forever]*

Yeah, we did. I mean, he is genuinely saying, wait a minute, you guys. We only threw three — Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, right? Right. Why do you ask?

Because **“Look!”** *[Verse 25]* **he answered, I see four men loose...** *[Wait!]*

Woo-hoo-hoo! I thought they were bound. They're not bound anymore. They're loose. Here's a takeaway, just real quick. Sometimes God will deem it necessary to allow us to go into that fiery furnace of a trial, if for no other reason than to burn off the ropes that bind us. That's the purpose of it.

And not only are they loose now, instead of being bound, they're **“...walking in the midst of the fire.”**

And I can't believe my eyes. Walking — wait a minute. First of all, this thing just logistically has to be huge. I mean, they were thrown in, bound, face down, just, you know, tossed in, and then now they're not tied up anymore because that fiery trial burns off those things that bind us. And now, not only are they not bound and face down, they're walking. They're walking around?

See, if it were me, I'd be, like, curled up in the corner going, I'm still alive, I'm not burned! And these ropes that were once bound, they're gone! They got burned off! They're, in fact, the only thing that were burned. And watch this. **“...and they are not hurt,”** King Nebuchadnezzar says.

Oh, if you're in a trial, you will not be hurt. God does not want to hurt you or harm you. He has a plan for you of a future and a hope for you, not to hurt you. And this is what the enemy does, right? He comes in; you're in a trial. You're like, God's punishing me. God's mad at me. God's angry with me. God's going to really hurt me for this one. No, you will come out of this unscathed.

So here's Nebuchadnezzar still — just I mean, astonished would arguably be an understatement. And he goes on to say, not only are there four instead of three, not only are they loose instead of bound, not only are they walking in the midst of the fire instead of

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face down, and they're not even hurt, I don't even see anything. **"...and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."**

That's because, well, it is *[Ha!]* the Son of God, God the son, Jesus the Christ. Wait, He hasn't even been virgin born yet. I know. It's called a Christophany, a pre-Bethlehem appearance of Jesus the Christ, replete throughout the Old Testament.

This is Jesus there in the midst of that fiery, seven-times-hotter furnace. Jesus is there with you in the midst of your fiery trial. He's in there with you. He's for you.

I want to pose an interesting possibility here. There is no mention. It's an assumption. But there's no mention that with a certainty Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego knew that Jesus was there. There's no mention of that. There's a conspicuous absence of that particular detail in a chapter that is filled with detail.

So why do I point that out? Because sometimes when you're in the midst of a fiery trial, it doesn't seem like Jesus is there, but He is. You may not see Him, but He's there in the midst of that. He will never leave you or forsake you. He is with you always, lo, unto the ends of the earth.

**"Then *[This gets even more bizarre, verse 26]* Nebuchadnezzar went near the mouth of the burning fiery furnace."**

Okay, I thought you weren't stupid. Okay, that's the last time for sure. I mean, I wouldn't do that. You know, your guys that, you know, they got burned, and you're going up to this thing? Curiosity killed the cat and the king it sounds like here. But I guess he gets — he's smart enough to know not to get too close, so just close enough to talk to them.

And we're told he **"...spoke, saying, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, servants of the Most High God, *[Oh!]* come out, and come here."**

Listen, I know I've shared this before, but if I'm Shadrach, Meshach, or Abed-Nego, I'm like, Neb, I'm good. I'm not coming out there. Jesus is here. And by the way, you're the one that threw me in here in the first place. I got an idea. Why don't you come in here? How about that?

I mean, there's — just pray for me. There are other people like me that think like that.



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So come out! What in the world? I think he wants to know what's going on here. And I think he's making an assumption that they're going to bring this fourth guy out too because he wants to meet this guy that looks like the Son of God, that is the Son of God.

*[So]* **“Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego came from the midst of the fire. [Now verse 27] And the satraps, administrators, governors, and the king's counselors gathered together, [You think?] [It's kind of like, whoa, what is going on?] and they saw these men [I want you to listen very carefully] on whose bodies the fire had no power.”**

Oh, again, that fiery trial has no power over you. And how about this one? **“The hair of their head was not singed...”**

When you're in the midst of a trial, God will not allow one hair of your head to fall except in my case. He's got the hairs on your head counted. The fire has no power over you. Not one hair of their head was singed. What did they do, like an examination? Let me see your hair. Let me look at you. Turn around. Wow you're not — there's no burn marks nowhere! You still got your eyebrows and your eyelashes and your hair.

But even the arms. You know when you singe your — when you're lighting, it can — zoop! Whoa! Wow! And you get this — for those of you that have arm hair. If you don't have arm hair, forget it.

So again, not only that, but **“...nor were their garments affected, and the smell of fire was not on them.”**

Again, I have a question. I just want to know. What did they do, go up and (Sniffing deeply) Wow! You guys — you don't even smell like you were in a fire. You know how when you barbecue, you smell like barbecue? It's in your hair if you have hair. It's in your clothes. Not them; there's no signs of any fire, nothing. You don't even smell like fire or smoke.

**“Nebuchadnezzar spoke, [Verse 28] saying...”**

Now don't get too excited here. Next week we're going to see this — I don't want to ruin it. This is Nebuchadnezzar now. **“Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, who sent His Angel and delivered His servants...”** *[I told you so]*

**“Delivered His servants.” “The Lord will deliver us.”**

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And here's Nebuchadnezzar, **“and delivered His servants who trusted in Him, and they have frustrated the king’s word, [That would be me long live the king] and yielded their bodies...”**

Stop right there! That's *Romans 12:1-2*, **“Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, pleasing and acceptable.”** This is the perfect will of God. **“Don't be conformed to the pattern of this world.”**

Don't bow down to the gods of this world. Be transformed and renewed. Don't conform. Don't just go along with the crowd. I know the pressure is profound, but don't be conformed, and do it because, well, everybody else is doing it.

No. They yielded their bodies.

Listen. We yield our bodies as living sacrifices, not dead sacrifices. Dead sacrifices don't put up a fight. They're dead. A living sacrifice? A different story. A living sacrifice: You present yourself as a living sacrifice. You yield your body and you place yourself on the altar.

They **“yielded their bodies, that they should not serve nor worship any god except their own God!”** Now notice **“their own God.”** I think Nebuchadnezzar was still a little bit irritated. **“Therefore, [This guy is something else] 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.”**

Okay, listen, just bring it down a notch, okay? What is up with you? You just like hacking people to pieces? What is wrong with you? You want to torch their houses down to the ground, to an ash heap? We don't want people worshiping our God that way.

We don't want them to be forced to the way you guys do. You force people to worship your gods that are no gods at all. Not our God! Our God is worshipped because we love Him and obey Him.

So Nebuchadnezzar goes over the top, and he says that the reason that he's going to make this decree to hack people into pieces that say anything — you get caught talking stink about their God, I'm going to hack you up into pieces and burn down your apartment. Why?

**“Because there is no other God who can [Listen very carefully] deliver like this.”**

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You got that right. My God will deliver me from that fiery trial no matter what, without fail, without question. The only question is how, the way, when. I don't question that He's going to deliver me, I know He's going to deliver me. And you just admitted it, by your own admission, Nebuchadnezzar, that there is no other God who can deliver like this.

Then they get another promotion. You got to know these Chaldeans. They are livid now.

**“Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego in the province of Babylon.”**

Okay, let's wrap it up. Now remember the last part of *Chapter 2*, when Daniel was promoted over all the astrologers and magicians and sorcerers and Chaldeans? He was overseeing all of them, and he was promoted and exalted and taken up to the highest position possible next to King Nebuchadnezzar himself. We talked about that last week.

But Daniel also got this promotion for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, not that high position next to King Nebuchadnezzar, but they were still promoted. Now, why do I emphasize that? Because where's Daniel? He's not there.

And this is where the marriage between the personal application and the prophetic implication is just so beautiful. Because, yes, God will deliver you from that trial. And I want to encourage you. If you're here tonight or watching online, and you're going through the trial of your life, God will deliver you, and God will see you through. You be encouraged. That's a given.

But there's more to it than that. Daniel has pre-furnace been exalted and lifted up to a high position and is not there because — you know he's not there because if he was there, he would not have bowed down. Hello. So he's not there.

So but why are Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego there because they were promoted too? Yeah, but not to the high, exalted position of being taken up and taken out and not there. So Daniel is a picture of the church and the pre-Tribulation [*Seven*] rapture of the church. Nebuchadnezzar did not turn the furnace up 3.5 times hotter. No, seven.

Daniel is a type of the church pre-7-year tribulation. Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego a type of Israel who were saved in the midst of the 7-year tribulation when they come to a saving knowledge of their true Messiah, Jesus the Christ.

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And they do this when they realize that this false Christ is not the Christ because their Messiah would never commit the abomination demanding to be worshiped, or else. Worship me, my image. And if you don't, it's not a fiery furnace. It's off with your head. Either way, you're dead.

The image of the beast? The image of Nebuchadnezzar? 666, the number of the man, the Antichrist in place of Christ. The church pictured in Daniel? Pre-tribulation rapture, 7-year tribulation, and Israel goes into the tribulation and is saved in the midst of the tribulation. Because that's the purpose of the tribulation is for the salvation of the Jewish nation. And by the way, when exactly does the Jew realize, wait a minute, this guy is not the Messiah. We were duped and deceived.

*Daniel 9:27*, which is what seals the deal when Jesus, in *Matthew 24*, quotes Daniel and says, **“When you see the abomination that causes desolation, that Daniel the prophet spoke about...”** When does that happen? *Daniel 9:27*. There's a period of seven, a covenant with many for seven. You're not getting away from seven. It's not six and it's not eight.

And we're almost done. Don't look at the clock. It's after 8:30. We're almost done. This is worth it, you know. Seven: In the midst of the seven, the midst of the seven-times-hotter fiery furnace, this Antichrist sets up an image in the temple and demands to be worshiped as God.

And that's when, at the three-and-a-half-year mark, right smack — I'm sorry if I'm yelling— right smack in the middle, middle of the furnace, middle of the tribulation, abomination that causes desolation, and it leads to the salvation just like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, that picture, the nation of Israel are saved in the middle of the seven-times-hotter fiery furnace.

And here, it even gets better. Last thing, and we're done. So Daniel's not there, but he's coming back just like we're going to be coming back with Him. See, here's how that works. At the rapture, Jesus comes for us. At the Second Coming after the 7-year tribulation, Jesus comes with us, His bride by His side, 10,000 by His side.

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Oh, that alone, just the prophetic typology should be of such encouragement to anyone that is in the midst of a trial. God has you in that furnace. He's with you there in that furnace, and He will deliver you from that fiery furnace.

One last thing. I'm learning in my own life with the many painful trials, sometimes they're simultaneous. You know what I mean? I mean, it's kind of like you're going through a trial, and then boom, here comes another trial.

Like, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa! What are you doing here? I'm already in a trial. I can't! No, you need to reschedule. You know what I'm talking about?

No, the trial's like, no, I'm not rescheduling. I'm here right on time. And trial on top of trial. And then you're just going wow! And then here comes a total of seven trials simultaneously. You're like, this is how it ends. I ain't making it out of this one. I mean, God can.

But if He doesn't, blessed be the name of the Lord. **“The Lord gives and the Lord takes away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.”** But this is how it ends. So (Singing) ♪ Thanks for the memories ♪ That was, Bob Hope, one for you young people who have no idea.

So what's my point? My point is this. And I'll close. The trials, plural, are so intense. But one of the things I'm learning is, while I would never want to have to go through them again, I would never trade what God did in and through those fiery trials for anything in the world. In fact, and some of you will know what I mean by this when I say this, but you'll actually find yourself thanking God for that fiery trial because God did things in you and through you and for you that He could have never otherwise done, had it not been for that fiery furnace of affliction.

Oh, as scary and terrifying as it was — I don't want to minimize how terrified — they were human. I mean, I guess into the fire we go, Abed-Nego. To bed we go? I don't know; to the fire we go. I mean, they had to know that, you know — I mean, they weren't like, you know, jumping up and down before they got the ropes like, hey, throw us in, let's get this show on the road. This is going to be hot, man. Smoking hot.

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I know I'm butchering it and taking it too far, but you get the point. You're going to thank God for that fiery trial because of what God did in that fiery trial. Take heart and be encouraged.

Kapono, come on up. We'll close. Thank you for your patience. Stand up. Oh, what a chapter. Man, oh man, oh man, oh man! I could have gone another hour, you know. No, I know you know that.

[ Laughter ]

But let's pray. Thank You, Lord. There's so much here. There's so much to take home with us tonight. But we need for the Holy Spirit to do that for us. Because unless the Holy Spirit does that, we're not going to take everything that we can learn from this and apply to our lives home with us.

We're going to — oh, how we forget, especially when we're in the so-called heat of the battle, the midst of that fiery trial. And we're just in panic mode, and we're terrified, and full of fear, and panicking and...

But You're there. And You're going to deliver us. You're doing so many things. And we're going to come out of this thing, and there won't even be the smell of that on us, no harm done to us. Lord, would You remind those of this, especially those who are in the midst of something like this, and it just keeps getting worse? And it just looks so hopeless.

Lord, bring hope to the hopeless. Encourage the discouraged. And thank You for Your word, Lord! Thank You for this chapter. Wow! We love You so much. In Jesus' name, Amen.