

DANIEL – The Key to Revelation

Week 3 – “Nebuchadnezzar’s Golden Image”

10/04/26 – PM

TEXT: Daniel 3:1-30

Introduction to Chapter 3 / Review

Egypt fell to Babylon in 606-605 B.C., around the time that Daniel and his friends were deported. The second and main deportation of the Jews occurred in 597 B.C. The final deportation from Jerusalem was in 586 B.C., and the city was burned on the 9th of Ava.

Chapter 3 of Daniel takes place in 580 B.C., about 23 years after the events of chapter 2.

I. An Idolatrous Image (vs. 1-7)

- a. A 90 foot high and 9 foot wide image (60 cubits by 6 cubits)
 - i. “6” is the number of man (Revelation 13:18)
 - ii. 6 (man) is inferior to 7 (God’s number of perfection)
- b. Made of gold. Some have speculated that it was a wooden image overlaid with gold, but either way, it represented a form of state religion, where everyone was commanded to worship this image. This order was to intended to unite all the peoples of Babylon, with their different backgrounds and religions, into one form of worship. Nebuchadnezzar built it in the Plain of Dura, so that it would not be overshadowed by the magnificent buildings of Babylon.
- c. This golden image is a foreshadow of the image of the Antichrist (Beast) which will be set up in the Great Tribulation period (Rev. 13:14-17). At that time, similar to Nebuchadnezzar’s decree, all that refuse to fall down and worship the image will face death.
- d. Much like the Tower of Babel, this image represents a one-world religion and government system.

- e. Nebuchadnezzar had spent time in Egypt and seen the pyramids, the Sphinx, and other monuments of the Pharaohs.

II. A Foolish Frenzy

- a. Nebuchadnezzar builds this image out of pure pride and arrogance.
- b. Quote from Dr. Larkin – *“All men are religious by nature, and are easily carried away by anything that stirs their religious feelings. Knowing this, Nebuchadnezzar took advantage of it. Everything was done to excite and stir the religious emotions of that vast multitude. Large orchestras, with their various musical instruments, were stationed at convenient places, and all the paraphernalia and ritualistic ceremony of idolatrous worship with the most gorgeous display of religious trappings, such as were used by the Babylonian cults, were doubtless used to impress the bystanders, and get them to worship the image.”*
 - i. His invitation (vs. 2-3)
 - ii. His instructions (vs. 4-7)

III. The Angry Accusers (vs. 8-12)

- a. We know that these men had faithfully done their duties and served Nebuchadnezzar for over 20 years (Ch. 2:49)
 - i. Their accusers said the three “have not regarded” the words of the king.
 - ii. When it came to worshiping an idol, the Jews obeyed a higher law (Exodus 20:4-6 / Acts 5:29)

IV. A Raging Response (vs. 13-15)

- a. Nebuchadnezzar (in his pride) was furious that anyone would defy his orders.
 - i. He questions the men about their conduct
 - ii. He questions them about their God (vs. 15)

V. A Trusting Testimony (vs. 16-18)

- a. They already knew what they were going to do / say. This was their conviction (recent message). ***“We are not careful to answer thee in this matter.”*** Our mind is set. Live or die, this is our stand.
 - i. They could have made excuses to compromise with the world, but they didn’t. The greatest words in their reply are these: “But if not”. They were sold out to whatever God’s will was for them – they just knew it wasn’t His will for them to break His commandments.

VI. A Divine Delivery (vs. 19-25)

- a. The command – 7 times hotter
- b. The consuming fire – It killed the mighty men / soldiers
 - i. Death by fire was a well-known Babylonian practice of the time (Jeremiah 29:22)
- c. The comforter in the fire (vs. 24-25)
 - i. Isaiah 43:1-5
 - ii. They would rather be in the fire with the Son of God, than in the palace with the king. – SHAZAM!
 - 1. They are spoken of in Hebrews 11:34 as those that “quenched the violence of fire”.
 - iii. Modern Bible versions change the words to “a son of the gods” (NIV for example)
 - iv. How did the king know that the fourth man was the Son of God? God apparently revealed it to him in answer to his question “who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?”
 - 1. Peter, James, and John recognized Moses and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration.
 - 2. All sinners will recognize the Son of God at the Great White Throne Judgment. (Also – Philippians 2:10-11)

VII. A Convinced King (vs. 26-28)

- a. Nebuchadnezzar calls the men out of the furnace to marvel at their complete deliverance. All the audience present were witnesses to the power and miracle that God had wrought that day.
- b. The king praised the men for trusting in their God, and “yielding their bodies” that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God.
 - i. What a tremendous testimony of faith and courage!

VIII. The Remnant of Revelation

- a. Just as this image is a type of the “image of the Beast” in Revelation, so too are these three Hebrew young men a type of the Jewish remnant, the 144,000 “sealed ones” in Revelation 7:3-8. The 144,000 will pass through the Great Tribulation without harm, divinely protected by the God who delivers from the fire.

Where was Daniel during chapter 3?

No explanation of Daniel’s whereabouts is given in the scripture. Bible scholars offer a few possibilities for his absence from this event.

- 1. As one of Nebuchadnezzar’s highest-ranking officials, it is believed that he may have been out of the city, or out of the kingdom on official business. Ancient Jewish commentary in the Talmud suggests he was “out of town”, which is why he was not accused alongside his friends. (Most consensus on this theory).
- 2. Because of his very high rank and favor as head of the Chaldeans, he might have been excused from attending the dedication.

Study references and commentaries used in this lesson:

“The Book of Daniel” – Rev. Clarence Larkin, 1929, published by the Clarence Larkin Estate, Glenside, PA 19038

“Daniel the Prophet” – Robert J. Sargent, 1987, published by Bible Baptist Church Publications, Oak Harbor, WA 98277

“Daniel – The Key to Prophetic Revelation” – John F. Walvoord, 1971, Moody Bible Institute, Chicago, IL