***Daniel 3***

***SUNDAY NIGHT STUDY****[[1]](#footnote-1)*

1. **The Results of Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream**
2. **Introduction**
3. Daniel had just told and interpreted Nebuchadnezzar’s dream about the image of different metals in Chapter 2.
4. Nebuchadnezzar’s kingdom was represented by a head of gold, and, as we will see, this appears to go to his \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_! The fact that he was the head of gold must have resonated with his \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
5. Nebuchadnezzar appears to praise Daniel’s God in 2:47, and promotes Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in 2:49. Does this mean the king is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ at this point? Chapter 3 will show us that is **NOT** yet the case.
6. Clearly, Nebuchadnezzar “reinterpreted” Daniel’s clear explanation of his dream, and in some way envisioned something other than what God meant.
	1. The dream in chapter 2, although Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, was **NOT** ultimately about him and his \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ – it was about God’s kingdom and what would transpire in Gentile kingdoms throughout the course of human history prior to God establishing His kingdom on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
	2. It was a re-emphasis and re-statement of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Covenant and an eternal king reigning in an eternal kingdom. – How comforting that God intended to keep His promises to the nation of Israel even while they sat in exile due to their rebellion.
7. **Daniel 3:1-7** - The establishment of the worship of Nebuchadnezzar’s golden image.
8. Daniel 3:1 - Nebuchadnezzar’s declaration about Daniel’s God (2:47) did not translate into a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ theology for him. Several years had most likely elapsed since the events in chapter 2.
9. It is quite possible that Nebuchadnezzar could have gotten the idea for this \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ from his dream in chapter 2, but we cannot be certain.
10. Nebuchadnezzar’s kingdom was the head of gold in the statue in his dream, but it was replaced by another kingdom made of silver (Medo-Persian kingdom).
11. So, building the entire statue of gold ***may have*** been Nebuchadnezzar’s way of saying his kingdom would be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, as reflected by the entire image being gold.
	* 1. It may have also been a way for the Babylonians to wipe out any Jewish remnant of thinking, or to test Jewish loyalty to him.
		2. The image itself was 90’ high and 9’ wide, and we are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ what the image was (i.e., image of himself, a combination of human and animal, or Nebuchadnezzar’s patron god, Nebo).
12. Daniel 3:2-3 - So, Nebuchadnezzar calls together all of the political and governmental \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in Babylon – part of the reason? So, that other people would also follow in bowing down to the statue. This was mass \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and societal pressure on a grand scale.
13. Daniel recorded the eight levels of political guest in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ order to emphasize the importance the king placed on this mandatory summons.
14. A *satrap* was the **highest** regional authority in a province.
15. A *prefect* was a regional military **chief**.
16. A *governor* was a captain, or regional **ruler**, in a province.
17. A *counselor* (or adviser) was a high-ranking **judge**.
18. A *treasurer* was a provincial **treasury** superintendent.
19. A *judge* was a lower-ranking **adviser** or judge.
20. A *magistrate* was a lower-level **legal** official.
21. A ***ruler*** *of province* was a grassroots assistant to the provincial satrap.
	1. Nebuchadnezzar knew that if every government **official** worshiped the image, common citizens would immediately be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to follow suit.
	2. After his defeat in chapter 2 this mandated assembly was likely orchestrated by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to regain absolute **control** over his crown jewel, Babylon.
22. Daniel 3:4-5 - Almost like a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ call to prayer in the middle east, when the people heard the music at this dedication ceremony, they were to fall down and worship the golden image.
	1. In fact, some of the Jewish people could have rationalized this situation and said, “This is just a country loyalty thing (like saluting the flag), and it is only a one-time deal, a dedication ceremony. What’s the big deal? Just do it and get it over with.”
	2. Some of these Jewish people were already engaged in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and hence their exile in Babylon in the first place, and so many may **NOT** have learned their lesson or even cared.
23. Daniel 3:6 - Now we learned back in verse 2 that Nebuchadnezzar set up this statue in the plains of Dura which seems like an insignificant fact until you consider the consequence for **NOT** bowing to his statue.
	1. We learn from the text that whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace – In Dura there were \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ nearby used for smelting and brick-making.
	2. So, when the text says “immediately” it meant it, since the means of executing the judgment for disobedience were conveniently \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_!
24. Daniel 3:7 - So, either faced with falling down and worshipping the gold image OR immediate death, most of the people chose worshipping the golden image, with the exception of a few!
	1. Although the final deportation of the Jews was still in the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ at this point (586 BC), all of those who had been deported to Babylon from Judah had a decision to make – Will I bow down to Nebuchadnezzar’s statute and be safe from harm, or will I NOT bow down (in allegiance to Yahweh) and face potential execution?
25. **Daniel 3:8-12** - The informants bring their accusations. Apparently, some of the Chaldeans, most likely jealous of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ rise of the Jewish young men, were keeping a close eye on them to report them.
	* + 1. Daniel 3:8-11 - Certain Chaldeans came forward to accuse Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and their accusations were right, as we will see – these men had **NOT** bowed down to the image and they must have stood out like \_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_!
				1. Who were the Chaldeans? – These men were the elite establishment of wise men in Babylon, and they had probably been \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ by these young men over the course of their three-year training (Daniel 1:4-7).
				2. Additionally, they had been shown up by Daniel and his friends in chapter 2 when Daniel was able to **NOT** only interpret the king’s dream, but also tell what the king’s dream was (Daniel 2:10, 27). – Daniel became their \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_!
				3. Clearly, they were out for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and took this as an opportunity to remove three young men, whom they viewed as threats to them. The word translated “accused” literally meant “to consume or devour” – this was someone ravenously accusing a foe!
			2. Daniel 3:12 - What’s interesting, is that Nebuchadnezzar apparently knew these young men, or knew about them as he put them in positions of authority in his kingdom (2:49). - But it is apparent that Nebuchadnezzar did not understand their religion fully.
				1. It is interesting to note that the Chaldeans make it a point to identify these three young men as \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and remind the king that HE was the one who appointed them to their position of authority.
				2. Most likely, Nebuchadnezzar took their disobedience in this area as disloyalty to him and his empire - this was a NATIONALISTIC issue to him!!
				3. Also, notice the accusation by the Chaldeans did **NOT** just involve worship of the statue in question, but also a negative comment about the fact that the young men did not even worship Nebuchadnezzar’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ gods!
26. **Daniel 3:13-15 -** Nebuchadnezzar’s initial reaction of anger.
27. Daniel 3:13 - Nebuchadnezzar’s ***angry***!! “Rage” and “Fury” are placed side by side to intensify the depiction of the King’s fury - It is a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ emphasis saying that he is extremely angry.
28. Daniel 3:14-15 - Nebuchadnezzar basically says, “Look! I’m going to give you one more chance because maybe you did not hear the command correctly before OR maybe you did not understand the consequences for not following the command, so let me tell you again…”
	1. Nebuchadnezzar asks a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ question: “Who is the god who will deliver you from my hands?” – He seems to have forgotten his own words in 2:47.
	2. Because Nebuchadnezzar viewed himself as a god, he could not \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ a god powerful enough to save these three young men from a fiery furnace. He could not do it and NONE of his gods could do it, but he is about to get introduced to the God who CAN and WILL deliver these young men from his hands!
29. **Daniel 3:16-18** –The young men’s response and introduction of the God who is able to deliver them to Nebuchadnezzar.
30. Daniel 3:16 - They handle this situation \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and respectfully, because they recognize, even in this situation, the civil government is in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ over them. Notice what they say:
	1. “We have no need to answer you in this matter” – Literally, we do not need to return a word to you. They are specifically responding to his question: “Who is the god who will deliver you from my hands?”
	2. The reason this does not require a verbal exchange is because of what they will share in verses 17-18. Either their God will or will not deliver, based upon His own \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in this situation.
	3. Notice, they do not \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to God the outcome! Nor do they expect God to deliver a certain outcome! - They are willing to accept death OR deliverance.
31. Daniel 3:17 - “If that is the case…” – In other words, if you decide to throw us into the fiery furnace, our God is definitely able to deliver us, but we are not sure if He is willing!
	1. They were **NOT** claiming they knew God’s will in this particular matter of being delivered, but they were POSITIVE on what His will was concerning Nebuchadnezzar’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_!
	2. This is really an incredible truth – We can fully trust God while totally accepting any \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_!
32. Daniel 3:18 - “But if not, let it be known to you, O king…” - If by chance our God is unwilling, we will still not bow down to your image, or worship other gods - They clearly communicate their position and their unwillingness to yield the King’s command. (Job 13:15)
	1. So, they maintain proper \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for the king and his position, and yet they engage in civil disobedience with a willingness to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the consequences for their actions, when they deem the government asking them to do something in contrast with the Word of God.
33. **Daniel 3:19-21** –Nebuchadnezzar’s second response to the young men’s clear refusal to follow his orders.
34. Daniel 3:19 - To say Nebuchadnezzar was “mad” would be an \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_! He was “full of fury” meaning he was “completely filled up with rage” and could not get any angrier! His fury was noticed in four ways:
	1. *(1st)*: Notice the “expression on his face changed” toward the young men.
	2. *(2nd)*: Notice “he spoke and commanded that they heat the furnace \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ times more than it was usually heated” – Nebuchadnezzar completely overreacted in commanding that the furnace be heated seven times hotter than usual.
	3. Daniel 3:20 - *(3rd)*: Notice he commanded the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ men in his army do the duty of tying Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego up and throwing them into the furnace. In this way Nebuchadnezzar did not want to leave anything to chance!
	4. Daniel 3:21 - *(4th)*: Also, notice that the young men were FULLY CLOTHED when thrown in. This seems like nothing more than a side comment in the narrative, but, as we will see, it is a detail which will become \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in the next few verses!
35. **Daniel 3:22-23** –The consequence is carried out and executed, but as we will see, NOT with the desired \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the king!
36. Daniel 3:22 - The king’s rash decision to have the furnace heated so hot, cost his strongest soldiers’ lives. This shows us how ***HOT*** this furnace really was to be able to kill the men who were just \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ it.
	1. This should have been Nebuchadnezzar’s first clue that something was **NOT** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ about this situation – why had his men died, and the young Jewish men had not? How were they able to survive being near the fire when his men had **NOT**?
37. Notice that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego ***FELL*** into the fire (they were ***NOT*** “thrown in”).
	1. What an incredibly helpless position these three young men were in. They were in NO WAY able to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ themselves at this point.
	2. They were bound up and had fallen to the ground and could not get up…they were truly helpless and in place to quickly burn to death!!
38. **Daniel 3:24-25** –Nebuchadnezzar’s third response – this time to something additional he observes.
	* + 1. Daniel 3:24 - Apparently, Nebuchadnezzar was watching this whole thing unfold, almost like it was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
				1. The text tells us that he was “astonished” meaning to be alarmed, or to be startled. It reflected an attitude or emotion implying a degree of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
				2. Also, the text tells us that he “rose in haste” and spoke to his counselors. He was REALLY startled by what he saw and notice his question: He wants to confirm something with his counselors – the number of men thrown into the fire.
			2. Daniel 3:25 - Now we understand why Nebuchadnezzar was astonished with a level of fear and why he tried to confirm some facts. Notice the four reasons given here:
				1. *(1st)*: He sees “four” men and not just “three” – Typically, when you throw people into the fire, you end up with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ people, **NOT** more!
				2. *(2nd)*: The men he had thrown in there were now loose and not bound – If they fire had burned off their restraints, would it not have burned them as well?
				3. *(3rd)*: The men were all walking around, not lying down – By the way, if they were loosed from their restraints and walking around, why were they still in the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_? Most NORMAL people in NORMAL situations would immediately jump OUT OF the fire!
				4. *(4th)*: The men were not \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_! – This is absolutely incredible considering he had just seen what the fire had done to his mighty men of valor!
			3. Nebuchadnezzar identifies this fourth figure as “the son of god” but since the word “god” is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in Aramaic it is probably better translated “the son of *the* gods.”
				1. He was probably simply communicating that the fourth figure is a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ being of some sort – in fact, he identifies this fourth being as an \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in verse 28, so he is **NOT** really sure what is going on!
				2. The case could be strongly made that this fourth being is none other than the pre-incarnate \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, known as a theophany in the Old Testament.
				3. This figure \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from the fire, He loosens them from what was binding them, and He stands them up on their feet and walks with them.
39. **Daniel 3:26-30** – The aftermath of the Jewish young men’s civil disobedience and stand for Yahweh.
40. Daniel 3:26 - Notice that Nebuchadnezzar earlier said “who is the god who will deliver you from my hands?” and now he calls their God the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ God!
41. Daniel 3:27 - The fire had no power on Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego’s bodies - hair was not singed, clothes were not burnt, and they did not even smell like fire!
42. Notice that the same men who had brought the accusations against the three young men were also \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ there, presumably to watch the “show” of these men being executed.
43. These men were witnesses as to the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that had happened and they SAW exactly what had happened!
44. Daniel 3:28 - Nebuchadnezzar identifies the correct and underlying RESPONSE that caused Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego to make the decision they did - they \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in their God!
	1. Also, they are said to have “frustrated” the king’s word, which is a great way to summarize this whole event. Nebuchadnezzar said “X was going to happen and no one can stop me” and God said, “No, X is not going to happen, Y is!” and it happened the way God said it.
	2. Notice also that they had \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ their bodies. They recognized that their lives were not their own.
	3. These young men had remembered the Word of God and remembered WHO their God was and these things formulated their response and willingness to accept whatever consequences that may come.
	4. Their willingness to make this decision and face possible execution for their loyalty to Yahweh seemed to really \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the king.
45. Daniel 3:29 - Nebuchadnezzar got his question answered from earlier “who is the god who can deliver you?” It is the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. It is the God of the universe, the “only” ***TRUE*** God.
	1. In typical overreaction form, now Nebuchadnezzar decrees that if anyone speaks amiss against the one TRUE God, they will be cut to pieces. Notice, he does NOT decree WORSHIP of their God, but rather no speaking \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ their God.
46. Daniel 3:30 – Again, notice how God continues to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ his own servants within the pagan kingdom of Babylon.

***Closing Comments***

1. God even cares about \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ kings! Notice how so far in the book of Daniel, God is using events in the life of Nebuchadnezzar as a part of his spiritual journey: Chapter 1 Nebuchadnezzar was amazed by the superior \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the Jewish youths, Chapter 2 Nebuchadnezzar was amazed by Daniel’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of his dream, now in Chapter 3 Nebuchadnezzar was amazed by the miraculous \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the three Jewish young men. As we will see, God continues to work in his life in Chapter 4…
2. This story is a good reminder for us NOT to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in our own lives, but to trust God’s Word and God’s character when difficulties come our way.
3. These events reveal a satanic plan for Israel’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ – if his plan had worked, all Jews would have either converted to pagan idolatry or faced death by fire. Even still, many Jews must have decided “just to bow” in order to save their own lives.
4. Ultimately, God is showing Satan and the sinful nations of the earth how man’s rule is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and how God ALONE is ultimately the One who deserves to reign.
1. A big thank you to DM2 ([www.dm2usa.org](http://www.dm2usa.org)) for many of these notes. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)