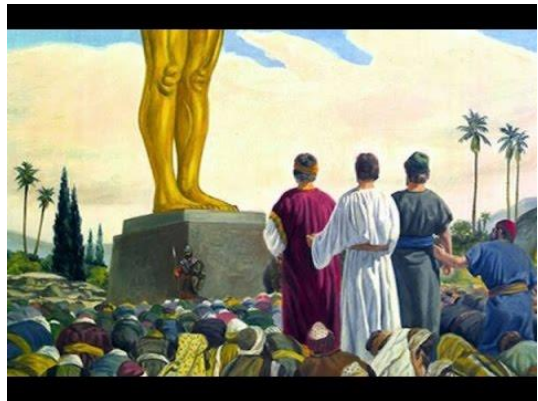


4—The Fiery Furnace

Daniel 3

1. What does King Nebuchadnezzar demand all government officials to do (Daniel 3:1-5)? What was the penalty for refusing (3:6)?

2. When some of the Chaldeans notice the Jews would not bow what do they do (3:7-12)? What might be some of the motives as to why the Chaldeans would make this report? Can you think of any modern-day comparisons where Christians refuse to do something which violates their conscience and it gets blown into a bigger deal than it ought?



3. In this chapter, we see intense peer pressure asserted through various mechanisms. How can these same agents influence us today and why? Is any temptation too great to overcome (see 1 Cor 10:13)?

- Government (3:2)?
- Music (3:5)?
- Enemies (3:8-12)?
- Employer (3:13-16)?

4. How did King Nebuchadnezzar react to this act of rebellion (3:13-15, 19)? How did the three friends react to him (3:16-18)? What advice can we give about our response to anger in the following passages (Proverbs 15:1; Ephesians 4:29-32; 1 Peter 2:17)?

5. 1 Peter 2:15-16 says we must “*submit ourselves to every ordinance of man*” and Romans 13:1 says “*Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities.*” Yet, what do Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego teach us about how we must handle an order from our government which violates our conscience (see Daniel 3:16-18; cp. Acts 5:29)?

6. Before these young, faithful Jews could obey God’s Word they needed to know it. Which of the Ten Commandments listed in Exodus 20:1-17 would have been violated by honoring the image?

7. What happened as an angry king attempted to carry out this execution (3:19-27)? What caused Nebuchadnezzar to be astonished (3:25)?

8. What did the king arrogantly declare to the disobedient Jews about their “god” in Daniel 3:15? How has his belief changed by the time we read Daniel 3:28-30?

9. What were these young men willing to do with their bodies as they served the God of Israel (3:28)? Does this remind you of any New Testament passages? List them.

10. Daniel 3:25 is an oft-debated passage as people try to identify the fourth person in the fire. Read this from a couple of different translations. Does it read differently? Can you find any statements from commentaries which help shed light on this question?