

## Daniel Chapter 3

### Persecution, Preservation, Promotion

Scripture Reading: Daniel 3:1-18

We don't know the exact amount of years between the events of Chapter two and three. It could have been two or three years. It could have been 20 years. One important thing we need to learn is that, after the events of chapter two, Nebuchadnezzar had been impressed by God's Word, but not transformed by God's power (2:46-47). It was Daniel's God that He honored. Nebuchadnezzar still had his own God. He had gained a better view of Daniel's God, but had not been humbled by that knowledge. Compare Daniel 2:37-38 with 3:1. Nebuchadnezzar must have focused on how he was the golden head in his dream. By chapter three he seems to be obsessed with the thought. Creating a golden image of himself, Nebuchadnezzar wanted to see a demonstration of loyalty to himself and to the Babylonian religion from all of these leaders that he had confiscated from other nations and put in his administration. Nebuchadnezzar would have unity through religion, culture, and fear.

We don't know where Daniel was at this time. Perhaps he was on business that caused him to travel. This would be a particular test for Hananiah (Shadrach), Mishael (Meshach), and Azariah (Abednego). They may be employed by Nebuchadnezzar, but they work for Jehovah! The very way Satan tries to destroy our faith is the way God causes it to grow. As a matter of fact, sometimes God even uses Satan to accomplish His purposes (See Job chapters 1-2 cp. James 5:10-11; I Peter 5:6-10). When our faith is tested, it is made more pure and strong. It is made more useful. It is able to glorify God (Job 23:10; Psalm 66:8-12; Isaiah 43:1-4; I Peter 1:3-9; 4:12-14). As stated before, Nebuchadnezzar had been impressed by God's Word, but not transformed by God's power. The power that he was about to experience would be through the testimonies of these three men whom he was trying to control.

#### **Persecution from the World Daniel 3:1-15**

The issue here is, "*Whom shall we obey – God or men?*" (Acts 4:13-20; 5:29). The Scriptures instruct us to submit to human government (Romans 13:1-7; I Peter 2:13-20). Yet, our Lord also qualifies this by saying, "*Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's*" (see Matthew 22:15-22). When we love God and obey Him, above man, we will experience the world's hatred. The world will mock, discriminate, persecute, punish, and attempt to subdue / control us (John 15:18-21; 16:33; II Timothy 3:1-14; I John 3:1, 12-13).

### **Preservation from God Daniel 3:16-27**

Nebuchadnezzar asked a question that he thought was rhetorical: “...*And who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?*” He thought that the answer, obviously implied, was that none could deliver them. Not only did God’s three servants answer him, but God also would answer him with action. God will never forsake His own. When we are doing God’s work, He empowers and protects us. An old hymn says, “...*Mortals are immortal here, until their work is done.*”

See Psalm 31:19-21; 34:15-22; Luke 21:12-19; Philippians 1:12-21, 28-30; II Timothy 1:12; 2:8-10; 4:16-18; Hebrews 11:32-34; **Revelation 12:11.**

### **Promotion to better things Daniel 3:28-30**

Don’t expect the world to love and honor God if we believers don’t love and honor God. A God for whom we would die is also a God for whom we should live. Through the actions of these three lovers of God, we now see honor and glory given to God. God also blessed them and caused them to be promoted. He rewards faithfulness now and in the world to come.

See Luke 16:10; Mark 10:23-31; II Corinthians 4:6-18; II Timothy 4:6-8; James 1:12; I Peter 5:10; **Revelation 2:9-10.**