**Lesson 3 Dan 3:1-30**

**Daniel 3:1-30 (NASB)**
1  Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, the height of which *was* sixty cubits *and* its width six cubits; he set it up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon.
2  Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent *word* to assemble the satraps, the prefects and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates and all the rulers of the provinces to come to the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.
3  Then the satraps, the prefects and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates and all the rulers of the provinces were assembled for the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up.
4  Then the herald loudly proclaimed: "To you the command is given, O peoples, nations and *men of every* language,
5  that at the moment you hear the sound of the horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery, bagpipe and all kinds of music, you are to fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king has set up.
6  "But whoever does not fall down and worship shall immediately be cast into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire."
7  Therefore at that time, when all the peoples heard the sound of the horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery, bagpipe and all kinds of music, all the peoples, nations and *men of every* language fell down *and* worshiped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.
8  For this reason at that time certain Chaldeans came forward and brought charges against the Jews.
9  They responded and said to Nebuchadnezzar the king: "O king, live forever!
10  "You, O king, have made a decree that every man who hears the sound of the horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery, and bagpipe and all kinds of music, is to fall down and worship the golden image.
11  "But whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire.
12  "There are certain Jews whom you have appointed over the administration of the province of Babylon, *namely* Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. These men, O king, have disregarded you; they do not serve your gods or worship the golden image which you have set up."
13  Then Nebuchadnezzar in rage and anger gave orders to bring Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego; then these men were brought before the king.
14  Nebuchadnezzar responded and said to them, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the golden image that I have set up?
15  "Now if you are ready, at the moment you hear the sound of the horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery and bagpipe and all kinds of music, to fall down and worship the image that I have made, *very well.* But if you do not worship, you will immediately be cast into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire; and what god is there who can deliver you out of my hands?"
16  Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego replied to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to give you an answer concerning this matter.
17  "If it be *so,* our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king.
18  "But *even* if *He does* not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up."
19  Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with wrath, and his facial expression was altered toward Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. He answered by giving orders to heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated.
20  He commanded certain valiant warriors who *were* in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego in order to cast *them* into the furnace of blazing fire.
21  Then these men were tied up in their trousers, their coats, their caps and their *other* clothes, and were cast into the midst of the furnace of blazing fire.
22  For this reason, because the king's command *was* urgent and the furnace had been made extremely hot, the flame of the fire slew those men who carried up Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego.
23  But these three men, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, fell into the midst of the furnace of blazing fire *still* tied up.
24  Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astounded and stood up in haste; he said to his high officials, "Was it not three men we cast bound into the midst of the fire?" They replied to the king, "Certainly, O king."
25  He said, "Look! I see four men loosed *and* walking *about* in the midst of the fire without harm, and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of *the* gods!"
26  Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the door of the furnace of blazing fire; he responded and said, "Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, come out, you servants of the Most High God, and come here!" Then Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego came out of the midst of the fire.
27  The satraps, the prefects, the governors and the king's high officials gathered around *and* saw in regard to these men that the fire had no effect on the bodies of these men nor was the hair of their head singed, nor were their trousers damaged, nor had the smell of fire *even* come upon them.
28  Nebuchadnezzar responded and said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, who has sent His angel and delivered His servants who put their trust in Him, violating the king's command, and yielded up their bodies so as not to serve or worship any god except their own God.
29  "Therefore I make a decree that any people, nation or tongue that speaks anything offensive against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego shall be torn limb from limb and their houses reduced to a rubbish heap, inasmuch as there is no other god who is able to deliver in this way."
30  Then the king caused Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego to prosper in the province of Babylon.

**The image of Nebuchadnezzar (**[**chap. 3**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3)**)**

**1. The Erection of the Image (**[**3:1-7**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A1-7)**)**

[3:1](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A1). The effect of the revelation given to **Nebuchadnezzar** about his significant role in Gentile history ([2:37-38](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+2%3A37-38)) is discerned from his response in the events recorded in [chapter 3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3). Identified as the head of gold ([2:38](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+2%3A38)), Nebuchadnezzar then caused **an image of gold** to be erected! ([3:1](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A1)) When he erected this image is not known. It had to follow the events recorded in [chapter 2](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+2) because Daniel's three companions were in a position of authority ([3:12](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A12)) to which they had been appointed ([2:49](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+2%3A49)).

The Septuagint adds in [3:1](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A1) that this event occurred in Nebuchadnezzar's 18th year (587), one year before the fall of Jerusalem (cf. [2 Kings 25:8](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Ki+25%3A8)). Since the final destruction of Jerusalem was the culmination of Nebuchadnezzar's conquests, that inference may well be true. However, a consideration of [Daniel 3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3) seems to indicate that the events recorded there took place nearer the beginning of Nebuchadnezzar's long reign. The events associated with the king's erecting the image suggest that he wanted to unify his empire and consolidate his authority as ruler. The image was to become the unifying center of Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom.

The Aramaic word translated "image" (el¢m) is related to the Hebrew word for image (*ṣelem*). A general term, it allows for the image to have been in a human form (perhaps like the statue the king saw in his dream), though it does not require it. Perhaps sometime earlier Nebuchadnezzar had seen an Egyptian obelisk, on which were recorded the exploits of one of the pharaohs, and wanted to record his own conquests that way. The dimensions of the image would be fitting for an obelisk, for it was **90 feet high** (about the height of a present-day eight-story building) and only **9 feet wide.** This 10-to-1 ratio of height to width does not fit an image in human form, for it would be too slender. However, the Babylonians often distorted the human figure in constructing their images. Or perhaps the image was in proper human proportions but was set on a pedestal to make it more imposing.

Regardless of the image's form, it was an awesome sight (cf. [2:31](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+2%3A31)), both because of its height and because of the gold of which it was constructed. The size and weight of the image seem to preclude that the image was of solid gold. It must have been overlaid with gold. Without doubt the use of gold in this image was inspired by Daniel's interpretation of the king's dream ([2:32](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+2%3A32), [38](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+2%3A38)).

The image was **set up... on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon.** Dura was a common name in Mesopotamia for any place that was enclosed by mountains or a wall. "The province of Babylon" (cf. [2:48](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+2%3A48)) seems to require a location close to the city of Babylon itself from which Nebuchadnezzar ruled his kingdom. Archeologists have uncovered a large square made of brick some six miles southeast of Babylon, which may have been the base for this image. Since this base is in the center of a wide plain, the image's height would have been impressive. Also its proximity to Babylon would have served as a suitable rallying point for the king's officials.

[3:2-3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A2-3). Nebuchadnezzar **summoned** eight classes of officials **to the dedication of the image.** This may suggest that the image was intended to symbolize the empire and its unity under Nebuchadnezzar's authority. The officers referred to in [verse 2](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A2) are listed again in [verse 3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A3) and four of them in [verse 27](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A27), thus emphasizing the political implications of this incident.

The **satraps** were chief representatives of the king, the **prefects** were military commanders, and the **governors** were civil administrators. The **advisers** were counselors to those in governmental authority. The **treasurers** administered the funds of the kingdom, the **judges** were administrators of the law, and the **magistrates** passed judgment in keeping with the law. The **other provincial officials** were probably subordinates of the satraps. This list of officers probably included all who served in any official capacity under **Nebuchadnezzar.**

On the possibility that Zedekiah, Judah's last king, was summoned to Babylon for this occasion see [comments](http://www.crossbooks.com/book.asp?pub=0&book=137&sec=00029241#links2166) on [Jeremiah 51:59](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jer+51%3A59).

To see so many officials stand before the image in Dura in Nebuchadnezzar's presence to swear their allegiance to him must have been impressive.

[3:4-6](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A4-6). In demanding that these officials **fall down** before **the image of gold... Nebuchadnezzar** was demanding a public display of recognition and submission to his absolute authority in the kingdom.

The fact that the officials were commanded not only to fall down before the image, but also to **worship** it, indicates that the image had religious as well as political significance. Since no specific god is mentioned, it may be inferred that Nebuchadnezzar was not honoring one of the gods of Babylon, but rather was instituting a new form of religious worship with this image as the center. Nebuchadnezzar purposed to establish a unified government and also a unified religion. The king constituted himself as both head of state and head of religion. All who served under him were to recognize both his political and religious authority.

The officials summoned by Nebuchadnezzar to assemble in the plains of Dura had not been told why they were called. When they were all assembled, the king's **herald** then announced that the officials were to recognize Nebuchadnezzar's political and religious power. The herald addressed the officials as **peoples, nations, and men of every language** (cf. [v. 7](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A7); [4:1](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A1); [5:19](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+5%3A19); [6:25](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A25); [7:14](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+7%3A14)), apparently considering the officials as representatives of the peoples over whom they ruled. So the officials' act of obedience signified submission not only by the officials themselves, but also by those peoples they ruled.

Elaborate preparations in the construction of the image of gold made the occasion aesthetically appealing. To this was added musical accompaniment to make the occasion emotionally moving. The orchestra included wind instruments (the **horn** and **pipes**; cf. [3:10](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A10), [15](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A15)), a reed instrument (the **flute**), and stringed instruments (**zither, lyre, harp**). Some critics argue that since the names of some of these instruments were Greek, the book was written later, in the time of the Grecian Empire. But communication between Greece and the Near East had been carried on for years before the Greek conquest by Alexander (see comments under "[Date and Authorship](http://www.crossbooks.com/book.asp?pub=0&book=137&sec=00031486#links2101)" in the *Introduction*).

Failure to comply to the command to worship the image was penalized by sudden death, being **thrown into a blazing furnace.** The severity of the penalty indicates that submission on the part of every official was obligatory.

[3:7](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A7). Overwhelmed by the king's command, the awesomeness of the image, and the sound of the **music,** the assembled officials **fell down and worshiped the image of gold.** In this way the officials and the peoples they represented recognized the political and religious authority of **Nebuchadnezzar.**

##### **2. The Accusation Against the Jews (**[**3:8-12**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A8-12)**)**

[3:8-12](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A8-12). No indication is given of the size of the multitude that assembled on this occasion. But because it included all the kingdom's officials ([vv. 2-3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A2-3)) it must have been huge. **Some** court advisers (**astrologers**; cf. [comments](http://www.crossbooks.com/book.asp?pub=0&book=137&sec=00031636#links2163) on [1:17](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+1%3A17)) were quick to bring an accusation against **the Jews.** The word translated **denounced** is strong, meaning "to tear in pieces." The accusation was severe, intended to destroy the accused. The accusers were evidently motivated by jealousy for they referred to the fact that **Nebuchadnezzar** had set **some Jews... over the affairs of the province of Babylon** ([3:12](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A12); cf. [2:49](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+2%3A49)). The jealousy evidently sprang from the king's recognition of the unusual ability of these men ([1:20](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+1%3A20)). Subjugated peoples, such as the Jewish captives, were normally relegated to positions of servitude, not elevated to authority in a realm. So the high positions of "some Jews" were resented.

The counselors evidently sought to curry favor from the **king** by contrasting the three Jews' refusal to bow to **the image** with their own **worship** of it. Interestingly they accused Daniel's three friends—**Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego**—but not Daniel. Since Daniel was appointed to a higher office ([2:48](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+2%3A48)) he may not have been required to attend (cf. [comments](http://www.crossbooks.com/book.asp?pub=0&book=137&sec=00031839#links2161) on [4:8](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A8)) or perhaps he may have been elsewhere in the empire carrying out his duties. Or maybe the astrologers did not dare accuse Daniel, who was present but like the other three did not bow. Whatever the reason for his not being mentioned, Daniel's dedication to his God and submission to the Law certainly precluded his bowing before the image.

##### **3. The Faith of the Accused (**[**3:13-18**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A13-18)**)**

[3:13-15](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A13-15). How significant this event was to **Nebuchadnezzar** is seen by his response to the astrologers' accusation of the three noncompliant Jews ([vv. 9-12](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A9-12)). When he heard that the three refused to bow, he became **furious with rage** (cf. [v. 19](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A19); [2:12](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+2%3A12)). The high esteem with which these men had previously been held by Nebuchadnezzar ([1:20](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+1%3A20)) did not exempt them from submission to his authority. Nebuchadnezzar did not pass an immediate judgment on the three but asked them if the accusation against them were **true.** He gave them another opportunity to bow before **the image.** By doing so they could prove the falsehood of the accusation (or show a changed attitude).

The king impressed on them the importance of such submission, warning them that the penalty for rebellion (being **thrown... into a blazing furnace**; cf. [3:6](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A6)) would be carried out **immediately.** Nebuchadnezzar considered himself above all gods, for he asked, **What god will be able to rescue you from my hand?** Again this shows that he claimed absolute authority in both political and religious realms. He was challenging any god to circumvent his authority. The matter then became a conflict between Nebuchadnezzar and Yahweh, the God of Daniel's companions.

[3:16-18](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A16-18). The three showed absolute confidence in God, stating that their God was greater than **Nebuchadnezzar** and was **able to** deliver them from Nebuchadnezzar's judgment in a display of His superior power. Their words, **the God we serve** (cf. [6:16](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A16), [20](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A20)), show they recognized that God's authority was greater than the authority claimed by Nebuchadnezzar. Though they were employed by Nebuchadnezzar ([2:49](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+2%3A49)), they "served" Yahweh.

Their God demanded implicit obedience and had forbidden them to worship any other gods. One who obeys God is not presuming when he expects God to protect and deliver him. Obeying God was more important than life to these three, so **if** God chose **not** to deliver them, they would still obey Him. Therefore they refused to **serve** Nebuchadnezzar's **gods** (**or worship the image** he made, possibly meaning to worship *him* as god) even if it meant they would die.

**4. The Deliverance by God (**[**3:19-30**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A19-30)**)**

[3:19](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A19). In spite of the high regard with which **Nebuchadnezzar** had held these three ([1:20](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+1%3A20)), he determined to demonstrate his authority by ordering their immediate execution. This would serve as a lesson to any others who might consider rebelling against his political and religious authority. In a fit of anger (cf. [2:12](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+2%3A12); [3:13](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A13)) Nebuchadnezzar had **the furnace heated seven times hotter than usual.** A low fire would have increased their torture by extending the duration of the punishment. A hotter fire would be expected to kill them instantly. Nebuchadnezzar wanted to display publicly the cost of rebelling against his authority.

[3:20-23](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A20-23). The king ordered **some of** his **strongest soldiers... to tie up** the three **and throw them into the blazing furnace.** The furnace was probably constructed with an opening in the top, through which fuel could be fed, and an opening in the lower side from which ashes could be taken. **Soldiers** threw or lowered the **three... into the blazing furnace.** It was customary to remove the clothing of those being executed, but because of the haste in which the king wanted his command carried out (**the king's command was... urgent**) this practice was not followed this time. **The flames** leaping through the top opening of the furnace **killed the men who** had **thrown** the three into the fire.

[3:24-26a](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A24-26). **Nebuchadnezzar** was watching the proceedings intently from a safe distance. As he peered into the furnace, probably through the lower opening, what he saw amazed him. The men who had been **tied up** were **walking around in the** furnace, **unbound.** And instead of seeing **three men** in the furnace, he saw **four,** and he said **the fourth** was **like a son of the gods.** This One was probably the preincarnate Christ (cf. [comments](http://www.crossbooks.com/book.asp?pub=0&book=137&sec=00000968#links225) on [Gen. 16:13](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ge+16%3A13)). Though Nebuchadnezzar did not know of the Son of God, he did recognize that the Person appearing with the three looked supernatural.

**Nebuchadnezzar... approached** as near as he dared to **the opening of the... furnace** so that his command could be heard. He ordered the three to **come out** of the furnace and to approach him. In giving this order he called them **servants of the Most High God.** Thus Nebuchadnezzar recognized that the God these three faithfully served (cf. [Dan. 3:17](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A17)) is truly God. The term "the Most High (lit., the Highest) God" or "the Most High" occurs 13 times in Daniel, more than in any other book except Psalms. Of those 13 occurrences 7 pertain to Nebuchadnezzar ([3:26](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A26); [4:2](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A2), [17](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A17), [24-25](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A24-25), [32](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A32), [34](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A34)) and 2 to Belshazzar ([5:18](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+5%3A18), [21](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+5%3A21)). The other 4 are in [chapter 7](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+7) ([7:18](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+7%3A18), [22](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+7%3A22), [25](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+7%3A25), [27](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+7%3A27)).

This was a remarkable admission by Nebuchadnezzar. Up to then he had believed that his Babylonian gods were superior to Yahweh (though he had once acknowledged the greatness of Yahweh, [2:47](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+2%3A47)). After all, he had taken captives from Judah and vessels from the Jews' temple. But his gods could not deliver anyone alive from a furnace! (cf. [3:29](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A29)) As the three had predicted, their God (Yahweh) was able to deliver them from the furnace ([v. 17](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A17)). Though the king recognized the unusual nature of Yahweh, he did not acknowledge Him as *his* God.

[3:26b-27](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A26-27). When the three walked **out of the fire** and were carefully examined, Nebuchadnezzar's officials (cf. [comments](http://www.crossbooks.com/book.asp?pub=0&book=137&sec=00031770#links2167) on [v. 2](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A2)) saw that the **bodies** of the three men were unharmed, their clothing unaffected, and that the **smell of fire** was not even on their clothes.

[3:28-30](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A28-30). In view of the evidence presented to him, **Nebuchadnezzar** declared that this was an act of **the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego** **who** had **sent His angel** (cf. [v. 25](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A25)) to rescue the three who served this God (cf. [v. 17](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A17)). Nebuchadnezzar was moved by the devotion of the three to their **God** (he knew **they trusted in Him**), even though it entailed their disobeying the king and jeopardizing **their** own **lives.**

As a result the king decreed that **the God** of the three young men was to be held in honor and that anyone who dishonored this God would lose his life (he would **be cut in pieces** and his house would be burned to **rubble**; cf. [2:5](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+2%3A5)). **The king** then honored **Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego** by promoting them to positions of greater honor and power in the kingdom.

This historical incident seems to have prophetic significance as well. In the coming Tribulation a Gentile ruler ([7:8](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+7%3A8)) will demand for himself the worship that belongs to God ([2 Thes. 2:4](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Th+2%3A4); [Rev. 13:8](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Rev+13%3A8)). Any who refuse to acknowledge his right to receive worship will be killed ([Rev. 13:15](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Rev+13%3A15)). Assuming political and religious power, he will oppress Israel ([Rev. 13:7](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Rev+13%3A7)). Most of the people in the world, including many in Israel, will submit to and worship him. But a small remnant in Israel, like the three in Daniel's day, will refuse. Many who will not worship the Antichrist will be severely punished; some will be martyred for their faithfulness to Jesus Christ. But a few will be delivered from those persecutions by the Lord Jesus Christ at His second coming.

In the forthcoming Tribulation period God will do for this believing remnant what He did for Daniel's three companions. They withstood the decree of the king, and though they were not exempted from suffering and oppression they were delivered out of it by the God they trusted. No doubt the remnant of believing Jews in that coming day will find great comfort, consolation, and instruction from this incident in the lives of Daniel's three companions, as those in Daniel's day must have found as they were living under Gentile rule.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty.

**Open it**

1. If an artist were to sculpt a representation of you, what special instructions would you give him or her?

2. If a fire were to start in your home, what would be your plan of action?
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**Explore it**

3. What did King Nebuchadnezzar make? ([3:1](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A1))
 **made an image of gold, the height of which *was* sixty cubits *and* its width six cubits; he set it up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon.**

4. Whom did he invite to the dedication ceremony? ([3:2-3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A2-3))
 **to assemble the satraps, the prefects and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates and all the rulers of the provinces to come to the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.  Then the satraps, the prefects and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates and all the rulers of the provinces were assembled for the dedication of the image**

5. What were the people commanded to do? ([3:4-5](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A4-5))
 **Then the herald loudly proclaimed: "To you the command is given, O peoples, nations and *men of every* language, that at the moment you hear the sound of the horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery, bagpipe and all kinds of music, you are to fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king has set up.**

6. What warning did the herald give? ([3:6](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A6))
 **But whoever does not fall down and worship shall immediately be cast into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire**

7. What happened when the music began? ([3:7](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A7))
 **Therefore at that time, when all the peoples heard the sound of the horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery, bagpipe and all kinds of music, all the peoples, nations and *men of every* language fell down *and* worshiped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up**.

8. Why did the astrologers complain to the king about the Jews? ([3:12](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A12))
 **There are certain Jews whom you have appointed over the administration of the province of Babylon, *namely* Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. These men, O king, have disregarded you; they do not serve your gods or worship the golden image which you have set up."**

9. What did the king do about the complaint? ([3:13-15](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A13-15))
 **Then Nebuchadnezzar in rage and anger gave orders to bring Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego; then these men were brought before the king.
14  Nebuchadnezzar responded and said to them, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the golden image that I have set up? Now if you are ready, at the moment you hear the sound of the horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery and bagpipe and all kinds of music, to fall down and worship the image that I have made, *very well.* But if you do not worship, you will immediately be cast into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire; and what god is there who can deliver you out of my hands?"**

10. How did Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego respond to the king? ([3:16-18](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A16-18))
 **Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego replied to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to give you an answer concerning this matter. If it be *so,* our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But *even* if *He does* not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up."**

11. What did the king order his men to do? ([3:19-21](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A19-21))
 **Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with wrath, and his facial expression was altered toward Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. He answered by giving orders to heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated. He commanded certain valiant warriors who *were* in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego in order to cast *them* into the furnace of blazing fire. Then these men were tied up in their trousers, their coats, their caps and their *other* clothes, and were cast into the midst of the furnace of blazing fire.**

12. What happened to the king’s soldiers? ([3:22](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A22))
 **For this reason, because the king's command *was* urgent and the furnace had been made extremely hot, the flame of the fire slew those men who carried up Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego.**

13. What happened to the three men? ([3:23](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A23))
 **But these three men, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, fell into the midst of the furnace of blazing fire *still* tied up.**

14. Why was the king amazed? ([3:24-25](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A24-25))
 **Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astounded and stood up in haste; he said to his high officials, "Was it not three men we cast bound into the midst of the fire?" They replied to the king, "Certainly, O king." He said, "Look! I see four men loosed *and* walking *about* in the midst of the fire without harm, and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of *the* gods!"**

15. What did the crowd observe when the men came out of the fire? ([3:26-27](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A26-27))
 **Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the door of the furnace of blazing fire; he responded and said, "Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, come out, you servants of the Most High God, and come here!" Then Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego came out of the midst of the fire. The satraps, the prefects, the governors and the king's high officials gathered around *and* saw in regard to these men that the fire had no effect on the bodies of these men nor was the hair of their** **head singed, nor were their trousers damaged, nor had the smell of fire *even* come upon them.**

16. How did the king respond to God’s deliverance of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego? ([3:28-30](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A28-30))
 **Nebuchadnezzar responded and said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, who has sent His angel and delivered His servants who put their trust in Him, violating the king's command, and yielded up their bodies so as not to serve or worship any god except their own God. "Therefore I make a decree that any people, nation or tongue that speaks anything offensive against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego shall be torn limb from limb and their houses reduced to a rubbish heap, inasmuch as there is no other god who is able to deliver in this way." Then the king caused Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego to prosper in the province of Babylon.**
**Get it**

17. If someone in authority over you told you to do something wrong, how would you respond?
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18. In what area of your life is it most difficult for you to stand by your Christian beliefs?
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**Apply it**

19. What are you willing to risk in order to obey God’s clear commands?
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20. How can you help someone in your community of faith who is going through difficult circumstances?
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