

Daniel 3

Verse 1:

The Great Controversy theme that we saw was the main theme of the book of Daniel as introduced in Daniel 1, is continued in Daniel 3.

In Daniel 2 we saw God's ability to tell the future and the control that God has over the affairs of men.

In Daniel 2 we saw God as the revealer of secrets

In Daniel 2 we saw God foretelling the rise and fall of nations until the second coming

In Daniel 2 we saw God setting up a kingdom that would last forever.

Straight away, in Daniel 3, we have a challenge to the sovereignty of God

A challenge to God's right and ability to do all the things that He said He was going to do in Daniel 2.

From Daniel 2, Nebuchadnezzar had received both good news and bad news.

The heart of Nebuchadnezzar would have swelled when he heard "Thou art that head of gold..."

But skipped a beat when Daniel said, "After thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee..."

The pride of Nebuchadnezzar:

You see the pride of Nebuchadnezzar knew no bounds.

He was a dictator and a despot.

He felt that he was the embodiment of the achievements of Babylon

We know that as a result of his statement in Daniel 4:30 "Is not this great Babylon that **I have built...**"

Notice the repeat of the word "set up" in Daniel 2:44 in Daniel 3:1,2,3,5,7,12, 14, 18.

This is a direct challenge to God's ability to "set up" the kingdom he said he was going to in Daniel 2:44

Being the ruler of the world is easier than being the ruler of yourself – just ask Bill Clinton

"The warfare against self is the greatest battle that was ever fought." The Faith I Live By 87

The distortion of the truth:

It is interesting how truth is twisted – God gave a clear indication of the future

Nebuchadnezzar retained a likeness to the true, but gave it a human element that made it entirely human.

The purposes of God were replaced with a human understanding of them

That's a common feature of the devils tactics in the last days. Eg. Sabbath for Sunday

Verse 2:

All the world is called to worship the image.

Remember that Babylon is the worldwide power at this time. Babylon controls everything. So to have all the governors and rulers of the provinces means that the representatives of the world are there.

This is reinforced by the statement of the herald in verse 4 "O, people, nations and languages"

Verse 25:

There are so many lessons in this verse – I don't know where to start!

The only effect of the fiery trial was to burn off the shackles.

That is what the purpose of affliction is:

In Revelation 3 there is some council given to the Laodecian church – the last church, the Seventh-day Adventist church just before Jesus comes.

In Revelation 3:18 “I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire”

To break the lukewarmness of the last church, God advises that the:

Shackles of indifference

Shackles of worldliness

Shackles of self serving

Shackles of disunity

Be broken. Sometimes the breaking of those shackles requires trials and difficulties.

God has always promised to be with us in trials

God sometimes asks us to go through the trials, but has promised that if that is the case he will always be with us.

It may be that Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego knew of something that Isaiah had written about 130 years before in Isaiah 43:1,2

In giving the Great Commission to his church in Matthew 28:20 God says “lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the earth”

In Daniel 12:1 there is once again assurance that in the time of the greatest trial in your life – God will be there!

You may be experiencing tremendous trials in your life right now – Jesus will be there!

The “form of the fourth” has promised to always be with us.

Can I suggest to you that the furnace with Jesus in it, is a more comfortable place than wealth, riches, luxury and comfort without Him. AMEN!

How did the heathen king know what the son of God looked like?

He had seen it in the lives of the Hebrews.

“How did that heathen king know what the Son of God was like? The Hebrew captives filling positions of trust in Babylon had in life and character represented before him the truth. When asked for a reason of their faith, they had given it without hesitation. Plainly and simply they had presented the principles of righteousness, thus teaching those around them of the God whom they worshiped. They had told of Christ, the Redeemer to come; and in the form of the fourth in the midst of the fire the king recognized the Son of God.”

Prophets and Kings 509

Is our witness as powerful and convincing as was that of the three Hebrews?

St Francis of Assisi said “Preach the gospel always, when necessary use words.”

Is our faith such that people that know us know what Jesus is like even though they may have never known Him or experienced him for themselves?

Do you think Nebuchadnezzar was converted by this experience?

If Daniel 4 was never written do you think we can be satisfied with where Nebuchadnezzar has come in his relationship with God?

No:

1. He still does not understand that religion cannot be forced
2. He is constantly referring to God as the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego
 - a. In Daniel 2:47 – God is Daniel’s God
 - b. In Daniel 3:28 – God is Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego’s GodHe has not yet made God his God – the God of Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel 4 will reveal the process by which this was purged out and he became a true believer.

THEME TEXT - There is no other God that can deliver after this sort.