



# **UNDERSTANDING PROPHECY:**

## **A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF DANIEL WEEK 6**

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# OUTLINE & TENTATIVE DATES

5/2

01

INTRODUCTION: AN UNFOLDING OF GOD'S  
STORY THROUGH AGES, TIMES, & MYSTERIES

5/9

02

WHO ARE THE JEWS?  
PAST, PRESENT, &  
FUTURE

6/27

09

DANIEL CH. 6

5/16

03

WHO IS THE CHURCH?  
PAST, PRESENT, &  
FUTURE

7/4

10

DANIEL CH. 7

5/23

04

WHO ARE THE  
GENTILES? BEGIN  
DANIEL CH. 1

7/11

11

DANIEL CH. 8

5/30

05

DANIEL CH. 2

7/18

12

DANIEL CH. 9

6/6

06

DANIEL CH. 3

7/25

13

DANIEL CH. 10

6/13

07

DANIEL CH. 4

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14

DANIEL CH. 11

6/20

08

DANIEL CH. 5

8/8

15

DANIEL CH. 12

## 06

## DANIEL CHAPTER 3

DEFEATING THE ENEMY & OVERCOMING  
THE WAYS OF THE WORLD

## PRIDE

Read: Daniel 3:1-7

- Describe the image of gold Nebuchadnezzar made. Similar to Genesis 1:27 where God made man in His own image, often the reference to "image" in Scripture denotes "human form." How does this act of Nebuchadnezzar indicate his confusion about the interpretation of the dream in Daniel 2:38?
- How does his action reflect his cultural beliefs as it pertains to religion and worship?
- Was the command to worship the image optional? At what time were the people to fall down and worship? What would be the consequence if they didn't?
- Was it real worship if it's not based on choice? How does this differ from Christianity? Also note differences in immediate consequences for failure to worship.
- The enemy often perverts and imitates the things of God. What imitations do you see in:
  - creating the image
  - the call to worship
  - casting the rebellious into fire
- Describe how each of these instances give a glimpse of Nebuchadnezzar and his view of himself. How does this challenge and oppose what had been "firmly decided" in chapter 2? What one word would best describe Nebuchadnezzar in light of the information he had already been given?

ACCUSATIONS, SELFISH AMBITIONS, FICKLE DOCTRINES, &  
CHOOSING TO BELIEVE

Read: Daniel 3:8-18

- Who accused the Jews? Why? (Glean from 1:20 & 3:12)
- Read Revelation 12:10. Who is the author of accusations? How often does he accuse? How do the enemy's fiery darts challenge your beliefs? How do you handle accusations? (Is there any truth in it?)

- Who is the father of lies? (John 8:44) There's only one way to handle a lie: reject it.
- How does Nebuchadnezzar's command in verse 13 contradict his original decree in verse 6?
- Read Proverbs 21:1. How does this display God's sovereignty?
- We see further contradiction (and evidence of God's grace) in verse 15 when Nebuchadnezzar gave them a chance to "repent." How do you think Nebuchadnezzar rationalized this decision? (Perhaps Daniel 1:20?) How was his decision less about grace and more about selfish ambition? What was he seeking in Daniel 1:4?
- What did Nebuchadnezzar ask in verse 15? (Discuss "s'mores theology!")
- Describe how polytheism would cause people's beliefs to shift with the wind. How do you see people today idolizing or worshipping worldly powers?
  - Technology - false sense of relationship
  - Wealth/finance - security
  - Politics - illusion of peace
  - Work - status or success
- What does 2 Timothy 4:3-4 teach is the root of fickle doctrine? The best way for Christian believers to filter desire is through the lens of truth. See Philippians 4:8 for a filter of truth!
- What did Shadrach, Meshach, & Abed-nego understand about God in verses 17 & 18? How does that affect their decision to stand against a ruthless king? How do your beliefs affect every choice that you make?
- Review Numbers 13:28-33 & 14:22-24, 30. Belief can put you into uncomfortable positions. Do you believe God's everlasting reward is greater than your immediate discomfort?
- Making a bold stand on belief won't always be a popular decision. The children of Israel wanted to stone Joshua and Caleb. But God protected them. Will you trust God to protect you?

**Read: Daniel 3:19-30**

- What did Nebuchadnezzar command in his fury and in response to Shadrach, Meshach, & Abed-nego's bold stand? Discuss how the accuser stokes the fire when his schemes are resisted.
- Why did Nebuchadnezzar choose "mighty men of valor" to bind the Jews? What happened to the mighty men?

- Ancient kilns were vertical tunnels with an opening at the top (picture Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom!). Verse 22 "took up" indicates going up a ramp to the top of the kiln to be tossed in. It's likely these kilns were used to sacrifice. Describe how this imagery differs from the earthen uncut stone altar as prescribed by the Levitical Law? Don't miss the simplicity of relationship in "being" with God vs. elaborate "doing."
- After the mighty men perish, the helplessly bound Jews fell into the kiln. What did Nebuchadnezzar see? (S'mores theology: Nebuchadnezzar had to divinely see it with his own eyes to understand it.) Perhaps he was looking on for self-gratification and vindication, but instead he encountered the Divine.
- How did he describe the "fourth man?" Nebuchadnezzar most likely did not realize what he witnessed. Nevertheless, he did recognize that he was seeing something supernatural.
- How does Nebuchadnezzar address Shadrach, Meshach, & Abed-nego when he called them out of the furnace? It is likely that Nebuchadnezzar recalled his declaration from Daniel 2:47 when he spoke in 3:26. Why would he call for Shadrach, Meshach, & Abed-nego but not the "4th man" as well? Perhaps he was afraid to encounter the Most High God and thought he could stay on the outskirts and be "safe?" How do our modern-day Christians approach their beliefs in a similar fashion?
- When examined, what did the officials learn about the Jews when they came out of the furnace?
- **THE FIRE HAD NO POWER!!!**
  - There's all kinds of injuries that could've been sustained with Shadrach, Meshach, & Abed-nego still coming out "alive". They could've simply "survived." But that's not what God ordained! Not a hair was singed or scent of smoke/fire was on them. What does this tell you about God's desire for you as you go through fiery trials? What does this teach you about His ability to protect you? How does this change the way you see your fiery furnace?
  - Read Psalm 103:1-6
    - Name 5 Benefits as a child of God:
      - forgives all your iniquity (salvation)
      - heals all your diseases (mental, physical, emotional, spiritual)
      - redeems your life from destruction (often from self! poor decisions influenced by worldly desires)

- THE FIRE HAD NO POWER!!! (continued)
  - Psalm 103:1-6
    - 5 Benefits as a child of God (continued):
      - crowns you with lovingkindness & tender mercies (be His light even when you don't feel like it!)
      - satisfies your mouth with good things (contentment & gratitude) so that...youth is renewed like the eagle's.
    - Describe a care-free youthfulness.
    - Describe the freedom of an eagle soaring. (It's untouchable?)
- What does God want for you???
- He may not ordain that you live a life of comfort outside the kiln, but He has in store for you so much more than merely surviving.
- Be reminded while in the kiln of Who executes righteousness and justice for your oppression. It's not your job. Let it go.
- What does your kiln look like?
  - Health problems?
  - Addiction?
  - Attempting to love the unloveable?
- It boils down to CHOICE. So simple, but sometimes so hard to do!
  - What do you believe about God?
  - Will you trust Him with your unbelief?
  - Will you trust Him to loosen the bonds of oppression?
- What did Nebuchadnezzar decree after this encounter at the fiery furnace? Notice the absolute authority he had in making and changing this decree. This will be relevant as we study the kingdoms from his first dream.
- How do you think his threat to "cut into pieces" (also stated in 2:5) was an attempt to maintain control, fear, and oppression over the people?
- How is Nebuchadnezzar's declaration and promotion of Shadrach, Meshach, & Abed-nego in verses 29 & 30 similar to the end of chapter 2?
- Everyone's faith journey is a progression, even yours. It doesn't start out perfect. Oftentimes we have to be reminded of God's benefits because we get blinded by the flames of our furnaces. Be intentional to cling to His promises because the enemy will assuredly be stoking the fire and attempting to devour you...an UNTOUCHABLE servant of the MOST HIGH GOD! It's up to you to choose to believe it.