

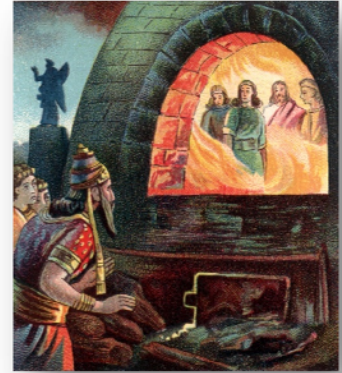
# THE BOOK OF DANIEL

## Chapter 3

- *Nebuchadnezzar was told he was the head of gold in his dream in Chapter 2. This statue is the epitome of his pride.*
- *Notice that **Daniel seems oddly missing from this event.***
- **Enormous image** was 60 cubits high, as tall as a 9 story building.
- **Use of “6”s is deliberate** (60 cubits, 6 cubits). 6 is symbolic for man. 7 is the number for perfectly complete, so 6 is 1 less, or incomplete.
- Nebuchadnezzar was seeking to unite together the tribes and tongues and peoples of his kingdom into one great totalitarian government. In this unification effort he was attempting to institute a world religion. **This was a repetition of the tower of Babel—a forming of one religion for the world.**
- **Punishment for failure to bow and worship** before the image (in violation of God’s second commandment, Ex 20:4–5, Lev 26:1, Deut 16:22) was to be cast into a **burning fiery furnace.**
- *“...certain Chaldeans...”* “Chaldean” implies astrologers, probably wise men whose lives had been spared by Daniel and his friends. We will see this kind of plot against Daniel in chapter 6.
- **Instead of rationalizing their way into compromise and sin**, these three Jewish boys stood faithful to the Lord. “We must obey God rather than men!” (Acts 5:29)
- *“And who is the god who will deliver you from my hands?”* Nebuchadnezzar’s pride shows here, and he is taunting the One true God.
- *“...we have no need to answer you in this matter.”* They are not concerned for their own well-being in the answer they give to the king.
- *...our God whom we serve is able to deliver us ...*” complete confidence in God’s ability to deliver.
- *“But if not, let it be known to you, O king...”* a bold testimony to God’s power and their willingness to allow His will in their lives, no matter what He decides to do. They want the king to know this.
- *“Then Nebuchadnezzar was full of fury...”* Nebuchadnezzar had an uncontrollable temper; he was soundly rebuked, and he knew it. The king’s pride caused him to make a very rash decision.
- *“...commanded that they heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated.”* This was completely unnecessary, but in his anger he is making the point that HE is mightier.
- *“...he commanded certain mighty men of valor...”* The king is going to sorely regret this command to these special “men of valor.” He will lose all of them to his pride and anger.
- **THE “SONG (OR PRAYER) OF AZARIAH AND THE THREE HOLY CHILDREN”...** in the Apocrypha, a beautiful passage is included between verses 23 and 24; records what they spoke in the furnace.
- **Who is this fourth man?** Actual words used are BAR ELAHIN, Aramaic for the Hebrew bar Elohim – son of God. *Elohim* is the word used for God throughout the OT. Many believe He is indeed Jesus, the Son of God.
- *“...the Most High God ...”* El Elyon (Hebrew) a common name for God in OT.



- **“Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego...”** Nebuchadnezzar is not pledging allegiance to this God, but recognized He is Omnipotent and superior to any other god he has known. He also acknowledged the trust of these young men and is impressed with their commitment and courage.
- **“...and yielded their bodies ...”** They were faithful to their God, even if it meant death. They had yielded their hearts well before this time.
- Just as God delivered and kept these Jewish followers of Yahweh, our Lord **Jesus is also more than able to keep His own.** (See John 10:27-28; John 17:11, 15; Hebrews 7:25)
- **“...there is no other God who can deliver like this.”** Nebuchadnezzar saw what Yahweh could do. He is willing to acknowledge that He is more powerful than any other god, but not yet ready to say and believe He is the **ONLY** God. That will happen in the next chapter.
- Hananiah, Azariah and Mishael are **once again back in favor with the king.** 2X they’ve been sentenced to death, 2X they’ve been miraculously delivered, and 2X they’ve been promoted. God blessed the Jews in captivity by providing Hebrews to rule over them on a daily basis.



**BIG QUESTION IN THIS CHAPTER: WHERE WAS DANIEL??** He may have been busy elsewhere with administrative affairs, or, as a higher official, may not have been required to attend the meeting. We don’t know where he was. Brings up the natural question about why he is not mentioned here. When we look at scripture, we must not only look at what IS there, but what is NOT there. Many believe the absence of Daniel is very deliberate. **God’s Word is always deliberate.**

**Genesis 22, story of Abraham and Isaac illustrates importance of knowing what is MISSING.** We know this story, but what is missing here is the fact that the name of Isaac, the type for Jesus, is not seen from this moment on Mt. Moriah until the unnamed servant goes and gets a bride for Isaac. What is missing in this story points to the greater plan of God where Jesus is not on earth and we don’t see Him until we (the Bride) are reunited with Him. There is also no mention of the Church from Revelation 4 until chapter 19 when she returns with her Husband. Another deliberate conspicuous absence.

**This entire chapter of Daniel 3 is thought by many to be an interesting parallel and type to the tribulation in Revelation.** See Revelation 13:11-18 and Matthew 24:15. **Nebuchadnezzar is a type for the Antichrist.** The image is one world religion. (Revelation 17). Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael may represent Israel during the Tribulation (Revelation 7, and 15:2). The furnace is the Tribulation. Daniel may represent the Church, and his absence at this event may indicate the absence of the Church on earth during the Tribulation.

**Daniel is the “beloved” prophet in the Old Testament.** John, the writer of the book of Revelation, was also called “the beloved.” Both prophets are considered representative of the Church.

**So where was Daniel? Missing.** Where is the Church in Revelation 4 through 18? Missing. Perhaps it is that during this time of tribulation the Church is indeed missing – at least on earth. This is all speculation, but through careful analysis of the Word, patterns, types, and what is there and not there (*conspicuously missing*).