

DANIEL 3

REVIEW...

- In the second year of King Nebuchadnezzar he had troubling dreams...
 - So he called for the wise men of Babylon to come and interpret them for him...
 - But Nebuchadnezzar demanded the 'wise men' tell him what he dreamt – then interpret it...
 - If they could give him the dream – then they would be given riches and honor...
 - If not then they would be cut into pieces – and their house turned into an ash heap!
- The captain of the guard came to execute all the wise men – including Daniel...
 - He asked for more time – and in a vision God revealed to Daniel the dream and its interpretation...
 - Daniel was rushed to the King - told him only God could reveal his dream was – and what it meant!
- The dream of the king – laid out the final kingdoms of this world...
 - An idol contained 5 parts – corresponding to 5 kingdoms that would rule the world...
 - With a head of Gold – representing the Babylonian empire and King Nebuchadnezzar...
 - A chest of Silver - representing the Medo-Persian Empire that would conquer Babylon...
 - A belly / thighs of Bronze – representing Grecian Empire that would conquer Medo-Persia...
 - Legs of Iron – representing the Roman Empire that would conquer the Grecian Empire...
 - Finally the feet of Iron and Clay – a Revived Roman Empire – ruled by the Anti-Christ!
 - Then a stone cut without hands – came and stuck and destroyed the idol...
 - No traces of all the kingdoms of men are left – they will be erased from history!
 - The stone will become a great mountain – fill the earth – the LAST / everlasting Kingdom!
 - The Millennium reign of Jesus – **Revelation 20:1-7** - and the New Heaven and New Earth!

ON FIRE FOR JESUS... (3 THINGS)

- 1ST – THE GOLDEN IDOL... vs. 1-7
 - 1st – The ONLY Kingdom... vs. 1
 - King Nebuchadnezzar built a statue 90' tall x 9' thick made out of gold...
 - It was so large that the idol was not placed in a city – but in the plains of Dura...
 - The sheer size of this idol does raise questions if it was made of solid gold or overlaid...
 - If it were solid gold – it would be over 8 million pounds of Gold – \$172 billion in gold!
 - More likely it was overlaid in gold – but either way it was created to be impressive!
 - It was made to make a statement...
 - Daniel had interpreted the dream of Nebby – calling him the head of Gold...
 - But there were 4 other kingdoms that were going to come after his...
 - And ultimately God would destroy them all and set up his eternal Kingdom...
 - This gold idol of Nebby was his way of saying he was the ONLY kingdom!
 - He thought he could undo the plan of God – he did not want there to be any changes!
 - It turns out God likes change – it keeps us dependent on Him...
 - If things did not change we would get comfortable – complacent in life...
 - But people tend not to resist change – they want things to stay just as they are...
 - We try to label things in life – we call them either Good or Bad...
 - Yet we will not always understand why God allows the things He does...
 - But there are no coincidences with God – He uses all things in our lives...
 - The in the end – everything He allows is meant to draw us closer and closer to Jesus!
 - **Romans 8:28** – “We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.”

- o 2nd – The ONLY one you can worship... vs. 2-7
 - Word went to all the officials of Babylon – from the princes / governors – to Judges / sheriffs...
 - Everyone was to be there for the dedication of the golden idol...
 - When they arrived – the proclamation was given – bow or burn!
 - Whenever music was played – horn / flute / guitar – it was the symphonic cue to kneel...
 - So when the music played – everyone was quick to bow down and worship!
 - Satan understand the power of music...
 - From the description in **Ezekiel 28:13** – is appears he was the worship leader in heaven...
 - He understands the power of music to influence the listener...
 - Either drawing them into the worship of God / or pulling them away...
 - Have you every noticed how a song can get into your head – hard to forget...
 - I purposefully avoid 'Its a small world' – when we are at Disney land for that reason!
 - There is wisdom in being cautious about what music we listen to...
 - Not that music or any particular instrument in itself is good / bad...
 - But being aware of the purpose behind the music we are listening to...
 - Was it created to glorify the things of this world – money / relationships / etc....
 - Or was it created to draw us into the worship of God – meant to glorify the Lord!
- 2ND – REFUSING TO BOW... vs. 8-18
 - o 1st – The Jews who would not bow... vs. 8-12
 - Certain Chaldeans came forward to accuse some of Jews of not worshipping the idol...
 - Men whom the King has set over the provinces of Babylon - Rack / Shack / and Benny...
 - The word accuse literally means to rip the flesh off of someone – showing their envy...
 - Likely as not these Chaldeans were jealous of the success of the Jewish boys...
 - They inevitably felt like they had taken positions that belonged only to Babylonians!
 - And seized on this as the 'perfect opportunity' to unleash their bitterness upon them!
 - If we envy the blessing of others – we can easily become bitter...
 - Funny how people are rarely happy with what they have – only with what they do not...
 - Envy is not about what we need – it is not being content with whatever we have...
 - Since God promises to provide what we need – **Matthew 6:33**...
 - When we are envious of others - we are essentially calling God a liar...
 - And we often end up tearing down others in an attempt to get what we want!
 - **James 3:16** – “Where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.”
 - Therefore we are to be content...
 - Most people dedicate their life to find - the BIG PAYDAY - the path to 'easy street'...
 - The reason people give thousands of dollars every day to the Lotto - just hoping...
 - Thinking if only I had lots of money like the rich people – then I would be content...
 - But if we have food to eat / and clothing on our backs – that is enough – **I Timothy 6:6-9**
 - Because when we came into this world – we had nothing...
 - And when we leave – we are going to take absolutely nothing with us...
 - So why do we waste time trying to get things that do not last - **Ecclesiastes 5:15-16**
 - When the only thing in life that really matters – is knowing Jesus!
 - o 2nd – Where was Daniel...
 - There is someone VERY mysteriously missing from this story – Daniel...
 - There is no question that he did not bow his knee to idol of Nebby...
 - Its possible there is a practical reason – perhaps he was away on some diplomatic mission...
 - But it also serves as a powerful prophetic picture of the Last Days...

- When the Anti-Christ comes to power – he will demand everyone worship ONLY him...
- To refuse him is a death sentence – beheading - **Revelation 20:4**
- There are those whom the Lord will protect during this time – 144,000 - **Revelation 7:4**
- But there is also a group that will be ‘mysteriously absent’ during the period!
- We call it the ‘Rapture’ - from the Latin translation of the Greek word - *Harpazo*...
 - Shortly after the rebirth of the nation of Israel - May 14, 1948 - **Mark 13:28-32**
 - Those who believe in Jesus – the church - will be snatched up into heaven...
 - No one knows the exact day or hour - only the Father in heaven - **Mark 13:32**
 - But the ‘trumpet of God sounds’ – the call for the church to go home...
 - **I Thessalonians 4:14-17** - “The Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout...”
 - We get to avoid the coming Great Tribulation – instead celebrate in Heaven...
 - Yet no man knows the day and the hour – so we need to be constantly prepared...
 - Because we know we are the last generation – Jesus is coming in our lifetime...
 - Let us live every day – knowing today could well be the day we see Jesus!
- o 3rd – The boldness of Rack / Shack / and Benny... vs. 13-18
 - In RAGE and FURY Nebby demanded the Jewish boys be brought before him...
 - He asked if it was true that they would not serve HIS gods / bow down to HIS statue...
 - Before they could answer – he gave them a way out...
 - If they were willing to bow down when the music played all would be forgiven...
 - But if they did not – into the fire – and what god could they trust to save them!
 - They boys were quick to answer both of the kings questions!
 - First - if the Lord wanted to – He could save them from the fire and the power of the King...
 - They had absolute confidence that God COULD save protect them...
 - **Isaiah 43:2** – “When you pass through the waters, I *will be* with you; And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, nor shall the flame scorch you.”
 - But there was no guarantee that God WOULD save them from a fiery death...
 - Because the reality is standing up for Jesus comes with very real risks...
 - But the worst they can do is kill us – then we go to heaven (*not a bad thing*)!
 - **Matthew 10:28** - “And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”
 - Second - even if God did not – they would never bow to the Kings gods / or his Idol!
 - You have to be impressed with these young men – they were VERY bold...
 - Not unlike Peter before the Sanhedrin / or Paul when he stood before kings...
 - These men were not speaking in their own strength – they were empowered by God!
 - **Matthew 10:19-20** – “When you are arrested, do not worry about what to say in your defense... it will be the Spirit of your Father speaking through you!”
 - Many times we are too shy to stand up for Jesus - we are afraid of what people might say...
 - But we do not have to stand in our strength – we have the power of the Spirit...
 - The number one result of being filled with the Holy Spirit - is boldness!
 - Many times we are also shy because we do not know what to say...
 - But it is not our words people need to hear - they need the Word of God...
 - Do not worry about what to say - just open your mouth - God will speak through you!
- 3rd – INTO THE FURNACE... vs. 19-30
 - o 1st – 7 times hotter... vs. 19-23
 - The face of Nebby changed when he heard the boys BOLD words...
 - He became full of RAGE – and demanded the fire be heated up 7 times hotter!

- The king commanded the Jewish boys be bound up head to toe (*coats / pants / and hats*)...
- The fame was so hot – that it killed the men who threw the boys into the fire!
- The King was not mad at the boys – he was angry because they stood up for truth!
 - He wanted them bound up – so their influence could not spread to others...
 - He wanted them thrown into the fire – as a warning to anyone who would follow them!
 - **Standing up for Jesus - means being an enemy of this world - John 15:18**
 - **The world hates Jesus because he convicts the world of sin and righteousness...**
 - **If it were not for Jesus men could do whatever they wanted without consequence...**
 - **John 3:19-20** - "This is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed."
 - **Because men LOVE sin they hate the light that reveals their sinfulness...**
 - **We have Jesus in us – so because they hate Jesus – they also hate the light of Jesus in us!**
 - **And because we do not do the things the world does - we convict the world of their sin!**
 - **So they world tries to silence us by mocking what we believe – creation / salvation...**
 - **They try to intimidate anyone who would stand up for the truth – Christian Bakery...**
 - **All in an attempt to keep us quiet – and to warn others who would follow us!**
- o 2nd – 4 men in the furnace... vs. 24-27
 - No sooner had the king thrown the 3 boys bound into the fire...
 - Then he stood up astonished – because the 3 boys were no longer bound...
 - **Because it is in the fire we are set free - John 8:36**
 - **Free because it is in the trials of life that we get to see God at work!**
 - **Giving us the confidence that He will take care of us / protect us...**
 - **Our confidence in the faithfulness of the Lord – gives us a godly character...**
 - **Men who do not panic in the trials – men who patiently wait on God...**
 - **Who trust in the Lord – depend on Jesus – because we have learned He is trustworthy!**
 - And there was a 4th man who looked like the Son of God...
 - Perhaps an Angel – which is what the king refers to the 4th person as in verse 28...
 - But some would say – I am one of them – that this was none other than Jesus!
 - **When we face trials in life – it mean that we have rattled the gates of our enemy...**
 - **Satan is not going to mess with us if we are content to sit on a couch watching TV...**
 - **But if we dare to stand up for the truth – then we are most defiantly going to be a target...**
 - **Not that we have anything to fear – because our foe is a defeated enemy!**
 - **And we do not stand-alone – we have the confidence Jesus is right there beside us!**
 - **Deuteronomy 31:6** – "Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the LORD your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you."
 - Nebby came as close as could to the inferno – and had to call the boys to come out...
 - Rack / Shack / and Benny were enjoying hanging out in the fire!
 - When they finally came out – they were not burned / hair not singed / not even smoky!
 - Silver is refined by putting it into the heat of an intense fire
 - The fire draws out the impurities of the silver so they can be removed
 - The smith knows the silver is pure when he can see his reflection...
 - **Trials are never fun – but they have a purpose – and we need to be patient - James 1:2-3**
 - **Because it is through those fiery trials God will to show us our heart...**
 - **He uses them to reveal the sin in our life - so that He can then draw it out!**
 - **Jesus put us in the fire to draw out the impurities from our life (*sin*)...**
 - **He knows when we are done – because He sees his reflection in our lives!**
- o 3rd – The God who delivers... vs. 28-30

- Nebby blessed the God of Rack / Shack / and Benny...
 - Because He had sent an Angel / Jesus - to deliver the boys because they trusted in Him...
 - And the king made a decree – if anyone spoke ill against the God of the Jews...
 - They would be cut into pieces – and their house turned into an ash heap!
 - Because no other God could do what the Lord did – saving the boys from the fire!
 - Then the King promoted Rack / Shack / and Benny to higher posts in Babylon!
- The result of the boys standing up for God – the whole Kingdom heard about the Lord...
 - When we stand for God in spite of the hardship – others will take notice...
 - God uses us to reveal Himself to others who otherwise do not know Him!
 - Why does God need us in order to magnify Himself...
 - Our sun is so big – if hollowed out – could hold 1.3 million earths...
 - But our sun is small compared to the star Antares – which is 850x the size of the sun...
 - So large that if you put it at the center of our solar system it would extend beyond mars!
 - But Antares is still not the biggest star in our galaxy – tittle belongs to VY Canis Majoris...
 - VY Canis Majoris is so large it could hold 9.3 billion of our suns!
 - Yet when we look up - they only look like a small prick of light in the evening sky...
 - Why – because they are so very far away!
 - God is huge – but lost sinners are very far from Jesus...
 - It is though our lives that we magnify Christ so that they can see His love!
 - Psalm 34:3 – “Oh, magnify the LORD with me, And let us exalt His name together.”