

THE FURNACE OF AFFLICTION  
(Daniel 3:1-30)

- I. The PRIDE of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 3:1-7)
  - A. Erected a GOLDEN IMAGE (3:1)
  - B. Assembled GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS (3:2-3)
  - C. Commanded UNIVERSAL WORSHIP (3:4-7)
    - 1. Announced by a HERALD
    - 2. Signaled by MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS
    - 3. Required those assembled to BOW
    - 4. Threatened DEATH in the FURNACE for refusal
- II. The CHARACTER of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego (Dan. 3:8-18)
  - A. ACCUSED before the King by RESENTFUL Chaldeans (3:8-12)
    - 1. Had been DELIVERED by Daniel's revelation (2:24)
    - 2. Had been DISCREDITED by Daniel's revelation (2:27-28)
    - 3. Had been DISPLACED by Daniel's exaltation (2:48-49)
  - B. CONFRONTED by the FURIOUS King (3:13-16)
    - 1. Offered a SECOND CHANCE for obedience
    - 2. Promised IMMEDIATE DEATH for disobedience
    - 3. Claimed even GOD couldn't SAVE THEM from him
  - C. ANSWERED without FEAR (3:16-18)

1. Asserted God's SUPERIORITY
2. Expressed their CONFIDENCE that God COULD deliver them
3. Expressed their COMMITMENT to obey God even if He DID NOT deliver them

III. The RAGE of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 3:19-23)

- A. FILLED with FURY
- B. Produced FOLLY
  1. Heated furnace SEVEN TIMES HOTTER
  2. Assigned BEST SOLDIERS to execute them
  3. Bound them in CLOTHES of OFFICE
  4. Ordered them CAST INTO the furnace
  5. Resulted in the DEATH of the EXECUTIONERS

IV. The POWER of God (Dan. 3:24-30)

- A. Shown while the prisoners were IN THE FURNACE (3:24-25)
  1. Instead of THREE men, there were FOUR
  2. Instead of BOUND men, they were LOOSE
  3. Instead of DEAD men, they were WALKING
- B. Shown when the prisoners came FROM THE FURNACE without INJURY or EVIDENCE (3:26-27)
- C. Shown in the King's RESPONSE (3:28-30)
  1. PROCLAIMED God's superiority
  2. PROMOTED God's servants