

Daniel



Lesson 6-Rebellion and Intolerance on the Plain of Dura

Focus: Daniel 3:1-30

- ❖ **An image was set up on the Plain of Dura to be worshipped (v.1-6, 7)**
 - Nebuchadnezzar now works in defiance of the dream that God had showed to him. He would like for the entire image to be gold, and for all the world to worship it.
 - The image measurements are 60 by 6 by 6 cubits (v.1)—compare with KJV (about 90 feet is the marginal reading). **Six is the number of man.** (Man was created on the sixth day; the number of the beast in Revelation 13:17,18 is 666, “the number of a man...”)
 - This scene shows us a **man-made religion**—a false system of worship! **The church and state combined—it was now the popular type of worship whether you liked it or not.**
 - **People from every class and station of life joined into this worship**—This is very similar to the Last Day Crisis that Revelation 13 speaks of (compare Rev. 13:13-17). The “patriotic” deception of music was used to encourage the people to bow down.
 - **Do you think we should ever follow something just because it’s popular?**
 - **If a national religion is enforced, who do you think we should obey: God or man?** (Acts 5:29 gives us the answer of Christ’s faithful apostles!)
 - **People were threatened with death for not obeying the government (v.6).** *This has always happened throughout history whenever church and state have combined!*
 - *Everyone bowed to save their own skin. Jesus says, we cannot be this way! No one can serve two masters (Matthew 16:25; 6:24; Revelation 12:11).*
- ❖ **There were “Certain Jews” who would not bow down (v.8-12)**
 - **Why didn’t they bow down? (Exodus 20:4,5)**—*The Ten Commandments tell us clearly that we are not to bow down to any idols or images. We cannot worship both them and God.*
 - **Why only “certain Jews”??** So many of the people of Israel were there! **Being of a faithful character to God means that you CANNOT just follow the crowd! We cannot just look around to follow what everyone else is doing! We must “STAND FOR THE RIGHT, THOUGH THE HEAVENS FALL!!!”** *“Do not follow a multitude to do evil” the word of God tells us (Exodus 23:2).*
 - They might have reasoned with themselves... “Well, if we just go down to tie our shoes when everyone else bows, then no one will notice us.” Yet, if they had done so, their act would have been cowardice and unfaithful. Their example would have further weakened the minds of other Jews present. **“Abstain from all appearance of evil”** the Bible says (1 Thessalonians 5:22).
- ❖ **The king of Babylon gets furious!! (v.13-15)**
 - He is a quick-tempered man with a rough and demanding character! *The king of Babylon boasted himself to be greater than any other god (v.15). He offered the young boys*

another chance to be unfaithful. However, they had already taken their stand and would not renounce their faith!

- ❖ **These young men trusted everything into God's hands (v.16-18).** They would be faithful to God, and He would be faithful to them! They trusted He was both ABEL AND WILLING to deliver them from the flame. **"BUT IF NOT..."(v.18)** "...be it known to you O King, we will not serve your gods, nor bow down to your golden statue!!" **Faithfulness to God was more valuable than life itself to these men**—as it has been to all the faithful martyrs of Christ throughout the ages! As Job put it, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him..." (Job 13:15). **These boys KNEW that they could TRUST GOD—They were willing to stake their lives on it! They had BUILT a trust with God by spending daily time with God** (and by bringing God into every aspect of their lives prior to this crisis)—We should do the same! (they knew they could trust God in any crisis)
- ❖ **The fire was made seven times hotter than it was normally!! (v.19-23, 24-25)**
 - The fire was so hot that it killed the men doing the king's dirty service. Make no mistake about the fire's heat—it was incredibly hot!!
 - **God did not deliver these men from the fire, but THROUGH THE FIRE!!!** (Imagine the trust, faith, and resolve they must have had as they were taken up to the fire). **OFTEN TIMES** in this life we are tested and tried. God does not always deliver us from the fire! We may go right through the fiery trials in our life. But, rested assured, Jesus will be with us in the fire, to help us pull through it! Only the bonds of these men were burned off—but they themselves were delivered without a scratch (in this case).
- ❖ **The king is amazed! He's compelled to bless the God of heaven! Then he promotes the ones who were faithful to their Awesome God (v.26-30).** *Note: Where was Daniel in this trial? Perhaps the king had sent him away on some business, for he knew that Daniel never would have heeded his words to disobey God!*

Question (s) for the Heart:

Will you get to know and trust God now, so that you can put your trust in Him when some Crisis comes along? _____ Will you choose and pray to be faithful to Him, whatever may come? _____