

Daniel 3 – Sermon Notes

The Fiery Furnace

As we float north down the Euphrates River, the walls of Babylon were known to be just under 300' high and 72' thick.

We can make out that it is a statue, covered in gold. Thousands of people are gathering at the foot of this statue. On the wall, there are hundreds of musicians, playing different instruments.

And then there is one more thing. In the rhythm of the music, as the verse swells into the chorus, the people who surround the statue fall on their knees and plant their faces into the ground.

In this machine of people, there is only one direction to go. And anyone not going in that direction, moving and falling as the crowd moves and falls, will be crushed.

Read Daniel 3:1-7 – Description of the Gathering

We certainly see in Daniel, that these men do their best not to cause unnecessary confrontation about their faith. They go about their faith quietly and sincerely, still attempting to be a blessing to those around them, even their enemies. But in chapter 3, there is no negotiating.

Read Daniel 3:8-12 – Back Stabbing Co-Workers

This is a pretty serious trap. You can tell by the repetition of the leaders involved and the musical instruments that there was no way to avoid this public requirement and go unnoticed.

Read Daniel 3:13-15 – The Confrontation

The question that the book of Daniel asks is “Is there someone who can rescue you beyond what we can know or imagine?” The King believes He is the highest authority. He is wrong.

Read Daniel 3:16-18 – We will not bow down

Whether they were “in your face” or humble like I believe, Nebuchadnezzar was furious. What he said... was law. You did not disobey a direct order from the king.

Read Daniel 3:19-23 – Thrown into the furnace

God uses the book of Daniel to introduce a new idea. It was a hint toward what would happen in the future. The kingdom of God is coming and is going to replace these earthly kingdoms. And second, a savior will come and lead us to that kingdom.

Read Daniel 3:24-25 – The Fourth Man

It was a blazing fire. You couldn't have seen more than an outline. You could see they weren't writhing in pain. You could see they were still clothed, but their hands were loose. You could see that there was a fourth man. That man was different.

Looking into this fire should break your heart. This is the Gospel – that in your worst moment, Jesus Christ is right beside you. We need to make that more than an idea. We need to know it as a reality.

Picture yourself in the fire. Walk into the furnace. It is the hottest heat you've ever felt. The flames are explosive.

This furnace is a traumatic moment in your life. Maybe you were hurt. It could be physical. It could be emotional. It could be something else. You feel helpless and afraid.

But in your furnace... you notice there is another man... like a son of the gods. And you notice that since he is there, you aren't burning. You aren't being scarred. Everything that is important for you to be you is still intact.

Jesus can heal your past. Jesus can heal your memories. Stay there... in that moment... standing with the fourth man.

Read Daniel 3:26-30 – The men are restored