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# PURPOSE IN YOUR HEART

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- Our last class was, "Daniel Blessed the God of Heaven"
- We looked at how Daniel faced his first crisis in Chapter 2
- **1)** Daniel was calm and composed even though his life was on the line
- He didn't panic because he had confidence in God
- **2)** Daniel acted with "wisdom and discretion"
- Daniel spoke appropriately and reasonably
- **3)** Daniel had the ability in the midst of panic to put people at ease
- Daniel was fearless because his life was in God's hands
- A person without composure will never be effective comforting or ministering to the needs of others, because life is often one crisis after another
- **4)** Daniel had faith that God would give him the ability to reveal dreams and visions
- Living by faith is doing things that you have never done before
- **5)** Daniel took his Problem to God in Prayer IMMEDIATELY
- Daniel's confidence was in God, so he immediately sought communion with the Lord
- He didn't expect to receive what he needed without prayer
- A Believer in crisis doesn't take his troubles to other people; he takes them to God
- He may ask other people to pray with him as Daniel did, but he knows God is the source
- **6)** Daniel blessed God

- Daniel blessed God in what amounts to a hymn of praise
- He blessed God for His attributes such as His wisdom, power, and omniscience
- **7)** Daniel thanked God
- Daniel thanked God for His blessings and especially for answering his and his friend's urgent prayer request

- **SLIDE**

- **8)** Daniel might have been motivated by compassion for the wise men
- He knew they were lost in their idolatry and he didn't want them to die
- **9)** In spite of all his gifts, brilliance, and spiritual maturity, Daniel remained humble
- He had received extensive training, was ten times wiser than the other wise men, and could interpret visions and dreams
- If anyone had anything to be proud of, Daniel did
- **10)** Daniel ascribes all the Glory and power to God!
- Daniel wouldn't take any credit for knowing the king's dream
- **11)** Daniel knew that he had been used by God for His purposes
- It wasn't HIS work, but the Lords

- **SLIDE**

- Today we will look at Chapter 3, and focus on the lesson of Verse 17:

“Our God Whom We Serve is Able to Deliver Us”

- We will see that God will be with us in the Fire, if we stand with Him in the fray...
- What vision did Nebuchadnezzar see in his dream that terrified him so?
- How had Daniel explained it to him?
- So, Nebuchadnezzar confronted this terrifying image that had caused him sleepless nights, and he tries to conquer his fears
- Obviously, one of the terrifying elements was his impending demise, and how the image in his dream was destroyed
- (Was the statue in his own image?)

- Even if it wasn't, Daniel leaves no suspicion behind, and explains how HE was the head of Gold
- So, Nebuchadnezzar tries to rewrite his fortunes by changing the image
- But, this time he makes the entire image of Gold
- (Do you think that this one was in his image also?)
- It's an immense and impressive project
- The Statue of Liberty is 151' tall, and if you've ever gazed across at it from New York, you can't help but be impressed
- Nebuchadnezzar's image was about 2/3 as tall, 90', and he sets it up in the plain of Dura, so that everyone could see it from a long distance away
- Daniel 3:1
  - 1) Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, *and* the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.
- Clearly, this is important to him
- So, he calls all the rulers together to celebrate
- Daniel 3:2
  - 2) Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.
- Who's missing?
- Why does chapter 3 not include the "ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise *men* of Babylon"?
- Why not even when his friends are thrown in the furnace?
- Who knows...
- **SLIDE**
- We do know that his three friends were there, and we know what they did...

• Daniel 3:3-12

- 3) Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up.
- 4) Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages,
- 5) *That* at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up:
- 6) And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.
- 7) Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of musick, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down *and* worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.
- 8) Wherefore at that time certain Chaldeans came near, and accused the Jews.
- 9) They spake and said to the king Nebuchadnezzar, O king, live for ever.
- 10) Thou, O king, hast made a decree, that every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, shall fall down and worship the golden image:
- 11) And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth, *that* he should be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.
- 12) There are certain Jews whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; these men, O king, have not regarded thee: they serve not thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

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- There are times when we might be accused of something (look at the ethnic overtones here)
- There are times when Christians have to disobey the law of the land when it goes against what is being commanded by God.

• **SLIDE**

• Acts 5:25-29

- 25) Then came one and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people.
- 26) Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned.
- 27) And when they had brought them, they set *them* before the council: and the high priest asked them,

- 28) Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.

• **SLIDE**

- 29) Then Peter and the *other* apostles answered and said, **We ought to obey God rather than men.**

- Believers, like ourselves, who live in the west are not used to persecution for our faith.
- We are not used to our freedom to preach the gospel being in question.
- But we believe that persecution because of the name of Jesus is coming to the western nations.

• **SLIDE**

- We also, may face the very same trial as Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego...
- Look at what they faced
- Nebuchadnezzar was furious so he gave them a private interview to persuade them
- Daniel 3:13-15

- 13) Then Nebuchadnezzar in *his* rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Then they brought these men before the king.
- 14) Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, *Is it* true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?
- 15) Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made; *well*: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who *is* that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?

- And look at how they responded:

• Daniel 3:16-18

- 16) Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we *are* not careful to answer thee in this matter.
- 17) If it be *so*, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver *us* out of thine hand, O king.
- 18) But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

- **SLIDE**

- We all get a choice as to whether or not we will follow the Lord.
- Several in fact each day.
- There are all sorts of temptations and trials that the world will throw at us seeking to draw us away from the Lord
- How do we respond?
- Daniel's friends were prepared to stand up against the temptation to sin, WHETHER or not God were to rescue them
- That is key!

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- I'm going to do what is right, and God IS ABLE to rescue me.

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- But, even if God chooses NOT to rescue me, I am still going to do what is right.

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- Fill your life with that kind of resolve, and you can face any trial.

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- Fill you life with that kind of faith, and you are bound to please your God.
- Please your God in that way, and He will rescue you
- Just like He rescued Daniel's three friends
- Daniel 3:19-27
  - 19) Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: *therefore* he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated.
  - 20) And he commanded the most mighty men that *were* in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, *and* to cast *them* into the burning fiery furnace.
  - 21) Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their *other* garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

- 22) Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.
- 23) And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.
- 24) Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, *and* spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king.
- 25) He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.
- 26) Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, *and* spake, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come *hither*. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, came forth of the midst of the fire.
- 27) And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them.

- Nebuchadnezzar goes insane
- He was so full of fury that his countenance changed into a raving lunatic
- He orders the furnace heated beyond which even the furnace was designed for
- The trial Daniel's friends faced was exceedingly fierce
  - So fierce that the fire slew the men who threw them in
- They could have repented of their heresy at any minute and bowed down
- But they remained faithful to God
- And God remained faithful to them
- **SLIDE**
- God participates in our trials
- They looked into the furnace and saw a fourth person
- God does not abandon us, quite the contrary, He is right there beside us in our moments of fear
- Why would there be a fourth person?
- Clearly, God could have made them fireproof without sending an angel

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- He sent the angel to comfort them!
- Imagine how terrified they were
- Imagine how shaky their faith was
- God wanted to be there for them, and to not just carry them through the trial, but to encourage and comfort them during it also
- He will do the same for us...

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- 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4:12 & 19 NLT

- 12) Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you.
- 19) So if you are suffering according to God's will, keep on doing what is right, and trust yourself to the God who made you, for he will never fail you.

- **SLIDE**

- Keep on doing what is right!

- **SLIDE**

- Trust yourself to the God who made you!

- **SLIDE**

- He will never fail you!

- Daniel 3:28-30

- 28) *Then* Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed *be* the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God.
- 29) Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort.
- 30) Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, in the province of Babylon.