

FACING THE FIERY FURNACE

Daniel 3 Sept 16th 2007

Thespian is an appearance by God (see **Judges 6:12-14**)

The time of Gentiles starts here in Chap 2: 4 and does not end until **Rev. 13:14b-18**

No mention of Daniel in this Chapter and this is the last time we see Daniel's friends. What fires are you going through now? How far are you willing to go in standing for your faith?

I. THREATENING DEMAND

Dan. 3:1-6

Remember that we left King Neb in chapter **2:38b** after he had found out that he was the head of gold. A number of years maybe as many as 16 have gone by and we see that perhaps the gold head has gone to King Neb's head.

Statue is not solid gold but plated. 90' x 9' Size is 60 cubits x 6 (606; very tall and skinny, normal ration of man is 5:1 this is 10:1) (see Rev 13:18 image number is 666).

The invitation list was to the aristocrats the leadership of the empire. Note that the list has 7 names and 6 instruments (number of completion, number of man). The repeat of the summoned list and the attendee list in vs. 2-3 just shows that if you were invited to a function of the king you went. **Ex 20:3-5** no other gods before me.

Furnace probably used for baking bricks and smelting gold on site.

QUESTIONS:

1. Remember in chap 2:47 Neb declares his allegiance to the God of Daniel. **Why** is it that we see God work and then turn around and worship something else?
2. If you were accused of bowing down to something or someone what or who would it be?
3. What fears tempt us to choose idolatry over obedience?
4. **Is it** ever Ok to be a secret believer? When why?

II. DETERMINED DEFIANCE

Dan. 3:8,12-15

Despite the fact that Daniel saved the Chaldeans **2:24**, they turned on Daniel's friends and turned them in.

Vs. 14 It appears that King Neb may have remembered how pleased he was with these three men 1:20 to give them a second chance.

Vs. 15 King Neb has changed a little, "who can rescue you from "my" power?"

QUESTIONS:

1. **Why are** Christian friendships valuable? Why do actions speak louder than words? See **Mt. 27:11-14**.
2. **What options** did S, M & A have in standing before the king?

III. CONFIDENT DEFENSE

Dan. 3:16-18

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego did not need to debate, defend, react, discredit or even need to answer. Reminds us of Jesus' trial **Lk. 23:9**. S, M & A did speak however giving testimony of the supremacy of their God.

Vs. 17 note if God exists they had no proof they had never seen him only saw His work in their lives and in their friend Daniel. They never claimed their God would rescue only that He could.

READ Heb. 11:32-38 not all of faith are rescued.

The Bible clearly shows that faith does not always result in earthly deliverance. John the Baptist, beheaded; Stephen stoned; Paul's thorn. The issue is not if your faith is strong enough but rather what is God's will.

QUESTIONS:

1. **What** did the three believe about God? He could rescue but they were not telling God what to do. A crisis shows what we really believe about God that is when the world is really watching.
2. **What** takes more faith **belief in rescue** or belief in **no rescue**? Genuine faith trusts God because He is God, not because of what He can do for us. That is one of the main points of the wilderness wonderings. See **Hab. 3:17-18**; Job 13:15.
3. **Why are subtle idols**, like romance, success, power, winning, addictions even more dangerous than physical idols?

IV. AMAZING DELIVERENCE

Dan. 3:24-28

Isa. 43:1-2

Note that the men had been cast into the fire fully clothed and bound but in the fire only their bonds were burned off. The power that saved S, M & A is same power that raised Jesus Eph. 1:18-20.

QUESTIONS:

1. What expectations do you have of God when you take a stand for Him?
2. Since God could have delivered at any point why did He allow the men to be thrown into the furnace?
3. Why were the men delivered? No. 3 & 4 from sermon by David Jeremiah
 - a. Absolute Obedience Psa. 108:1 ; 57:7
 - b. Absolute Confidence in God vs. 17
 - c. Absolute Courage when no one else was around, Daniel was out of town. Vs. 18
4. What were the results of their deliverance?
 - a. Enemies killed vs 22
 - b. Bounds eliminated vs 25
 - c. Hearts Encouraged 4th in the fire whenever we are in the fire He is there.
 - d. No evidence of pain
 - e. God Exalted vs 15 Neb asks the question vs. 29 He publishes his answer.
 - f. Faith increased, influence enlarged. When we are tested and our faithful our influence is enlarged.
5. Who was vindicated by the outcome? Phil. 2:10-11
6. Did the king make a commitment to serve God? Answer next week.