

# The Book of Daniel

## God's Prophet and Statesman

I. Daniel's Exile to Babylon (1:1-21)

II. Nebuchadnezzar's Troublesome Dream (2:1-49)

### III. Nebuchadnezzar's Threat against the Jews (3:1-30) (Part 1)

A. The *Conceit* of the King (3:1-3)

**3** Nebuchadnezzar the *king* made an image of gold, the height of which was **sixty cubits** and its width **six cubits**; he set it up on the plain of **Dura** in the province of **Babylon**.

<sup>2</sup>Then **Nebuchadnezzar** the *king* sent *word* to assemble the **satraps**, the **prefects** and the **governors**, the **counselors**, the **treasurers**, the **judges**, the **magistrates** and all the **rulers** of the **provinces** to come to the **dedication** of the image that **Nebuchadnezzar** the *king* had set up.

<sup>3</sup>Then the **satraps**, the **prefects** and the **governors**, the **counselors**, the **treasurers**, the **judges**, the **magistrates** and all the **rulers** of the **provinces** were assembled for the **dedication** of the image that **Nebuchadnezzar** the *king* had set up; and they stood before the image that **Nebuchadnezzar** had set up.

B. The *Command* to Worship the King's Image (3:4-7)

<sup>4</sup>Then the **herald** loudly proclaimed:

"To you the command is given, **O peoples, nations** and *men of every language*,

<sup>5</sup>that at the moment you hear the sound of the **horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery, bagpipe** and all kinds of **music**, you are to **fall down** and worship the golden image that **Nebuchadnezzar** the *king* has set up.

<sup>6</sup>But whoever does **not fall down** and worship shall immediately be **cast** into the **midst** of a **furnace** of **blazing fire**."

<sup>7</sup>Therefore at that time, when all the **peoples** heard the sound of the **horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery, bagpipe** and all kinds of **music**, all the **peoples, nations** and *men of every language* **fell down** and worshiped the golden image that **Nebuchadnezzar** the *king* had set up.

### C. The *Conspiracy* of the Chaldeans (3:8-12)

<sup>8</sup> For *this reason* at that time **certain Chaldeans** came forward and brought **charges** against the **Jews**.

<sup>9</sup> They responded and said to **Nebuchadnezzar the king**:  
“**O king**, live forever! <sup>10</sup> **You, O king**, have made a **decree** that **every man** who hears the sound of the **horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery**, and **bagpipe** and all kinds of **music**, is to **fall down** and **worship** the **golden image**.

<sup>11</sup> But **whoever** does **not fall down** and **worship** shall be **cast** into the **midst** of a **furnace** of **blazing fire**.

<sup>12</sup> There are **certain Jews** whom **you** have **appointed** over the **administration** of the province of **Babylon**, *namely* **Shadrach, Meshach** and **Abed-nego**.

**These men, O king**, have **disregarded you**; they **do not serve your gods** or **worship** the **golden image** which **you** have set up.”

### D. The *Charge* of the King (3:13-15)

<sup>13</sup> Then **Nebuchadnezzar** in **rage** and **anger** gave **orders** to bring **Shadrach, Meshach** and **Abed-nego**; then these **men** were brought **before** the **king**.

<sup>14</sup> **Nebuchadnezzar** responded and said to them,  
“Is it **true**, **Shadrach, Meshach** and **Abed-nego**, that you **do not serve my gods** or **worship** the **golden image** that I have set up?”

<sup>15</sup> Now if you are ready, at the moment **you hear** the **sound** of the **horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery** and **bagpipe** and all kinds of **music**, to **fall down** and **worship** the **image** that I have made, *very well*.

But if you **do not worship**, you will immediately be **cast** into the **midst** of a **furnace** of **blazing fire**; and **what god** is there **who can deliver you** out of **my hands**?”

### E. The *Bold Confession* of Faith (3:16-18)

<sup>16</sup> **Shadrach, Meshach** and **Abed-nego** replied to the **king**, “**O Nebuchadnezzar**, we **do not need** to **give you** an **answer** concerning **this matter**.

<sup>17</sup> **If it be so, our God** whom we serve is **able** to **deliver us** from the **furnace** of **blazing fire**; and **He will deliver us** out of **your hand, O king**.

<sup>18</sup> But **even if He does not**, let it be **known to you, O king**, that **we are not** going to **serve your gods** or **worship** the **golden image** that **you** have set up.”

# Message Summary

## 4 Key *Observations*

### 1. The *Pride* of Nebuchadnezzar

**Daniel chapter 3** begins with **King Nebuchadnezzar** making a large **image of gold** in the province of **Babylon**. Having been declared by **Daniel** to be the “**king of kings**”, and the “**head of gold**” in his **dream** (2:37-38), **Nebuchadnezzar** undoubtedly took **pride** in this **status**, and sought **personal glory** from **all**, through the **worship** of his **image**.

**Nebuchadnezzar** hadn't yet understood that his **high position** was **granted him by God**, for it is “**He who removes kings and establishes kings** (2:21).”

There is a **saying** that seems to fit here, that “**absolute power corrupts absolutely.**”  
The **scriptures** are filled with **warnings** to **believers** about the **peril of pride**:

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**Pride** goes before **destruction**,  
And a **haughty spirit** before **stumbling**. (Proverbs 16:18)

A **man's pride** will bring him **low**,  
But a **humble spirit** will obtain **honor**. (Proverbs 29:23)

As **believers**, we are admonished **not** to think **more highly** of **ourselves** than we ought to think (Romans 12:3) and that;  
**GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD,**  
**BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE** (James 46b).

### 2. The *Persecution* of the Godly

For **this reason** at that time **certain Chaldeans** came forward and **brought charges** against **the Jews...**

There are **certain Jews** whom *you* have appointed...  
These **men, O king**, have **disregarded you**; they **do not serve your gods** or **worship** the **golden image** which *you* have set up.” (3:8, 12)

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Indeed, **all** who desire to **live godly** in **Messiah Jesus** will be **persecuted**. (II Timothy 3:12)

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“**Blessed** are **those** who have been **persecuted** for the sake of **righteousness**, for **theirs** is the **kingdom of heaven**.” (Matthew 5:10)

### 3. The *Peril* of “Image” Worship

“You shall have no other gods *before Me*.

“You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven *above* or on the earth *beneath* or in the water *under* the earth.

You shall not worship them or serve them;  
for I, the **LORD your God**, am a **jealous God**,..”(Exodus 20:3-5a)

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Being then the **children of God**, we ought not to think that the **Divine Nature** is like **gold** or **silver** or **stone**, an **image formed** by the **art** and **thought** of man. (Acts 17:29)

As **believers**, we too are **confronted** by “**images**” that have been “**set up**,” and **idolized** by those in **powerful positions**, who **declare** that they should be to be **embraced** and “**worshipped**.”

Today we to have “**images**” of **gold**” (**wealth**), along with **images** of **power**, **pleasure**, **physical beauty**, **prestige (fame)**, **politics**, **works of art**, and so called **wisdom**, that both **entice** and **implore us** to pay them **homage**.

These all compete for the **attention**, **love**, and “**worship**” that should *only* be given to our great God and Savior.

### 4. The **Bold Proclamation** of Faith

**Shadrach, Meshach** and **Abed-nego** answered and said to the **king**,... we **do not need** to give you **an answer** concerning this **matter**.

If it be *so*, **our God** whom we serve is able to deliver us from the **furnace** of **blazing fire**; and **He will deliver us** out of **your hand**,...

But *even* if **He does not**, let it be known to **you**,  
**O king**, that we are not going to **serve your gods** or **worship the golden image** that **you** have **set up**. (2:16-18)

As we face the “**furnace**” of **affliction** and **persecution** for our beliefs, may **God** grant us courage and faith like that of **Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego**.

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,..but **sanctify Messiah as Lord** in **your hearts**, always *being ready* to make a defense to everyone who **asks you** to give **an account** for the hope that is **in you**, yet with **gentleness and reverence**; (*I Peter 3:15*)

Have I **not commanded you**? Be strong and courageous! Do not **tremble** or be **dismayed**, for the **LORD your God** is with you wherever you go.” (Joshua 1:9)

## Messianic Apologetics Challenge

Jews feel that since we worship and exalt (the Image of )Jesus, that we are breaking God’s command concerning images we have an “**image**” **problem**...How do we answer this?

1. First, as Messianic believers, we **worship** the **one true God**, the **God of Israel**, and proclaim His **oneness** or **uniqueness**. (Deut. 6:4) (Eph. 4:6)
2. According to **scripture**, there is an “***image***” of **God** because **man** was **created** according to the “***image and likeness***” of **God**. (Gen. 1:26-27)
3. According to **scripture**, we also believe that God did “**appear**” before men in various ways, even in the “**form**” of a **man**. These are called **theophanies**. (Gen. 18:1-33) (Gen. 32:24-30) (Ex. 24:9-12) (Num. 12:6-8)
4. We also believe that though the **Tanach** (O.T.) does not specifically proclaim **Messiah** to be “**divine**” in nature, the **scriptures** do ascribe **exaltation** and **worship** to:
  - a. An exalted **Son**—(Psalm 2:7-12) (Isaiah 9:6)
  - b. An exalted **King**—(Psalm 2:6) (Psalm 72:1-11) (Jer. 23:6)
  - c. An exalted “**Son of Man**”—(Daniel 7:13-14) (Zech. 13:17)
5. That being said, we believe that at the **appointed time**, and in accordance with **prophetic scripture**, God sent forth **His “Anointed”**, **His Messiah**. The **New Testament** reveals the **Messiah** as “**only begotten Son**” of **God**: (Galatians 4:4) (John 3:16)
  - a. Who is the “**living Word**”, the living “**expression**” of the **thoughts** and **will of God**

In the beginning was **the Word**, and the **Word** was **with God**, and the **Word was God**...And the **Word became flesh**, and dwelt among us, and we saw His **glory, glory** as of the **only begotten** of the **Father**, full of **grace** and **truth**.

...No one has **seen** God at any time; the only **begotten God** who is in the **bosom** of the **Father**, He has **explained** Him. (John 1:1, 14, 18)

- b. Who is declared as a **manifestation** of the **one true God**

For **in Him** (Messiah) all the **fullness** of **Deity** dwells in **bodily form**.  
(Colossians 2:9)

Jesus answered them, “...**I and the Father are one.**”  
(John 10:25a, 30)

c. Who is the “**image**” of the **invisible God**

And **He** is the **image** of the **invisible God**, the firstborn of all creation.  
(Colossians 1:15)

**God**, after He spoke long ago to the fathers **in the prophets**  
in **many portions** and in **many ways**, in these last days has **spoken to us**  
**in His Son**, whom He appointed **heir** of all things,

**through whom** also He **made** the world. And **He** is the **radiance** of His **glory**  
and the **exact representation** of His **nature**,... (Hebrews 1:1-3a)

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that we are breaking **God’s commands** concerning **worshipping**  
another **god**, and **worshipping** the *image of a Man*.

We have an “**image**” **problem**...How do we **answer** this?

1. First, as **Messianic believers**, we **worship** the **one true God**, the **God of Israel**, and proclaim **His oneness** or **uniqueness**. (Deut. 6:4) (Eph. 4:6)
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5. That being said, **we believe** that at the **appointed time**, and in accordance with **prophetic scripture**, God sent forth His **“Anointed,” His Messiah**. The **New Testament** reveals and declares **Jesus the Messiah** to be:

a. The **Word made flesh**. (John 1:1, 14)-The **revelation/expression** of the very **“Life” and Purposes of God** (I John 1:1-2)

In the beginning was **the Word**, and the **Word was with God**,  
and the **Word was God**....And the **Word became flesh**,  
and **dwelt** among us, and we saw **His glory**,  
**glory** as of the **only begotten** of the **Father**, full of **grace** and **truth**.

...**No one** has **seen God** at any time; the **only begotten God** who is  
in the **bosom** of the **Father**, **He** has **explained** Him. (John 1:1, 14, 18)

b. The **Son of Man** (Matthew 18:11, 20:28) (John 12:23)

c. The **“only begotten Son” of God**. (Galatians 4:4) (John 3:16)

d. The **fullness of Deity in bodily form**. (Colossians 2:9)

e. The **“image” of the invisible God**, the **firstborn of all creation**. (Colossians 1:15)

**God**, after He spoke long ago to the fathers **in the prophets**  
in **many portions** and in **many ways**, in these last days has **spoken to us**  
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