

DANIEL 3:1-15
Study by Glenn Palmer

Daniel 3:1

1. Nabu is the chief Babylonian god. In Akkadian, Nebuchadnezzar is *Nabu-kudurri-ušur*, which means Nabu, protect my son or Nabu, protect by boundary.
2. "An image of gold" - perhaps not a solid gold statue, but a statue covered with gold.
 - a. Cf. Isaiah 40:19
 - b. But it could be solid gold. Herodotus reports that
 - 1.) "there is a second temple, in which is a sitting figure of Jupiter, all of gold"
 - 2.) "In the time of Cyrus [a Mede from the silver kingdom] there was likewise in this temple the figure of a man, 18 feet high, entirely of solid gold." (Herodotus I:183)
3. In either case, a ninety foot tall statue of gold would have been very tall, especially in a kingdom before tall buildings. One of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, the Colossus of Rhodes, was 70 feet high.
4. The proportion of the width to height (1:10) is not normal for humans. If you are five feet ten inches tall (70 inches), then you would be seven inches wide. Thus, the height may have included a base so that the statue would have been more proportional. Otherwise it would look more like an obelisk.
5. The purpose of the statue.
 - a. Calvin
 - 1.) Outwardly, promoting a god.
 - 2.) Real reason: He is promoting his "own fame and reputation." No other king ever made such a statue, especially if it was solid gold.
 - b. Boice
 - 1.) In chapter 2, what does the statue represent? *Four Kingdoms*
 - 2.) Who is the head of gold? *Babylon*
 - 3.) Why does King Nebuchadnezzar now build a statue entirely of gold? *He does not want his kingdom to be superceded by any other kingdom. Thus, God has determined what will happen, and he rebels against God.*
6. Dura
 - a. Dura is a Babylonian word meaning "enclosing wall." Thus, if the statue was in the enclosing wall, a base would be necessary to be seen. This would have made a better proportion.
 - b. Dura is a place with many mounds. At el-Mokhattat, 12 miles from Babylon, there is a 45 square foot, 20 foot high solid brick base. Is this the statue's base?

Practical Application: Are we like Nebuchadnezzar, who in Daniel 2:47 confess that God is "the God of gods and the Lord of kings" and then not worship God properly?
Do we place other things between us and God?
Is God really in charge of all of our life?

Daniel 3:2

7. All the government is invited to attend.

Daniel 3:3

- 8. Esther 1:3.
- 9. Repetition is the Jewish style (also easier to remember).
- 10. Dedication: My gold statue is bigger than your silver (or stone) statue. Babylon is a super power because of this idol.

Daniel 3:4-5

- 11. What does the herald proclaim? *When you hear the musical instruments, “you must fall down and worship the image of gold.*
- 12. What is the penalty if you don’t do that? *Immediately thrown into the blazing furnace.*
- 13. Look up Exodus 20:1-6. *Worship only God - No graven images/molded images.*

14. The musical instruments:

NIV	KJV	ESV	Young	Origin	Description
horn	cornet	horn	horn	Semitic	curved ram’s horn Joshua 6:16
flute	flute	pipe	flute	Semitic	
zither	harp	lyre	harp	Greek	
lyre	sackbut	trigon	trigon	Greek	triangular in shape with four strings - originally Syrian
harp	psaltery	harp	psaltery	Greek	triangular shape stringed instrument
pipes	dulcimer	bagpipe	bagpipe	unknown	No one knows what this is. Polybus 26, 31 translated as <i>symphony</i>
and all kinds of music					

Calvin: “I do not know of what kind of these musical instruments were.”

- 15. The zither, lyre, and harp are the only three Greek words in all of Daniel. This supports the fact that Daniel was written around 600-520 BC, well before Alexander the Great’s conquest. After Alexander’s conquest, there are far more Greek words used in normal conversation.

Practical Application: What is the purpose of music in the worship of God?

Calvin: “God wished to use all means of stirring men up from their sluggishness, for we know how cold we grow in the pursuits of piety, unless we are aroused. God, therefore, used these stimulants to cause the Jews to worship him with greater fervor.”

Daniel 3:6

- 16. Why is the punishment so harsh?
 - a. Young: “Refusal to do homage to the image, since it was erected by king and for his glory, would be regarded as equivalent to treason to the state.”
 - b. 3:12
 - c. 3:14

Daniel 3:7

17. The Babylonians loved music.
- Isaiah 14:11
 - Psalms 137:3

Daniel 3:8

18. Why did the astrologers (Chaldeans) denounce the Jews? Note that the Bible does not specifically say why, but look up verses
- 1:2 *Prisoners of war*
 - 2:49 *“the king appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego administrators over the province of Babylon” Jealousy*

Daniel 3:9

19. How did they greet King Nebuchadnezzar? *O king, live forever.*

Daniel 3:11

20. According to Chardin, a French traveler in Persia in 1671-1677, there were two furnaces that were used for a month burning the bodies of those who had overcharged for food.

Daniel 3:12

21. Why is Daniel not mentioned?
- Hippolytus: Daniel there, but not watched.
 - Calvin: Daniel was so close to the king that he could not be attacked. These three could be more easily attacked
 - Boice: Daniel was on travel visiting other areas.

Practical Application: When is it permissible to disobey the state?

- Exodus 1:17-21 *to save lives - like the midwives*
- Romans 13:1 *We are to obey the government*
- Daniel 6:12-13 *Daniel disobeyed to pray*
- 1 Peter 2:13-17 *We are to obey the government*
- Joshua 2:4-7 *Rahab lied to save lives*
- John 19:8-10 *Jesus refuses to answer Pilate*
- Acts 4:17-20 *Peter and John disobeyed the Jewish counsel and kept preaching*

Calvin: “Nothing pleases God but what He has commanded in His Word; and the principle of true piety is the obedience which we ought to render to Him alone.

22. What serious crime did the Jews commit?
- “There are some Jews . . . who pay no attention to you, O King. Charge of ingratitude. King Nebuchadnezzar has placed them in charge of the province of Babylon, but they do not obey the king*
 - “They neither serve your gods nor worship the image of gold you have set up.”*
23. Do the Chaldeans discuss which religion is better? *No - just that their religion is better.*

24. According to I Peter 3:12, what type of lives should we live? *“Though they accuse of wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God.”*

Practical Application: *Do we live such good lives that the only accusation our enemies can bring against us is our worship?*

Daniel 3:13

25. In Daniel 1:3-4 we read that “some of the Israelites from the royal nobility-young men” and in vers 6 we read “Among these were some from Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.” Thus, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were only a few among the royal nobility. Where were the other Israelite royal nobility, the other leaders? Where there no other Jews in Babylon who did not bow down to the idol? Peer pressure to do evil.

Practical Application: *Are we willing to obey God even though no other Christian is with us? Note that it is easier to stand up to others when you are not alone. Thus, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah at least had each other.*

Note: what added benefit do we have in church, in our fellowships? It is easier to work as a body of believers than standing alone, even if it is only one or two people.

26. What is King Nebuchadnezzar’s reaction?

Daniel 3:14

27. Why does he ask “Is it true?”
- a. *Wants to give them the benefit of the doubt?*
 - b. *Suspects the motives of the accused*

Daniel 3:15

28. Nebuchadnezzar gives them a chance to wiggle out.
29. The challenge: “What god will be able to rescue you from my hand?”