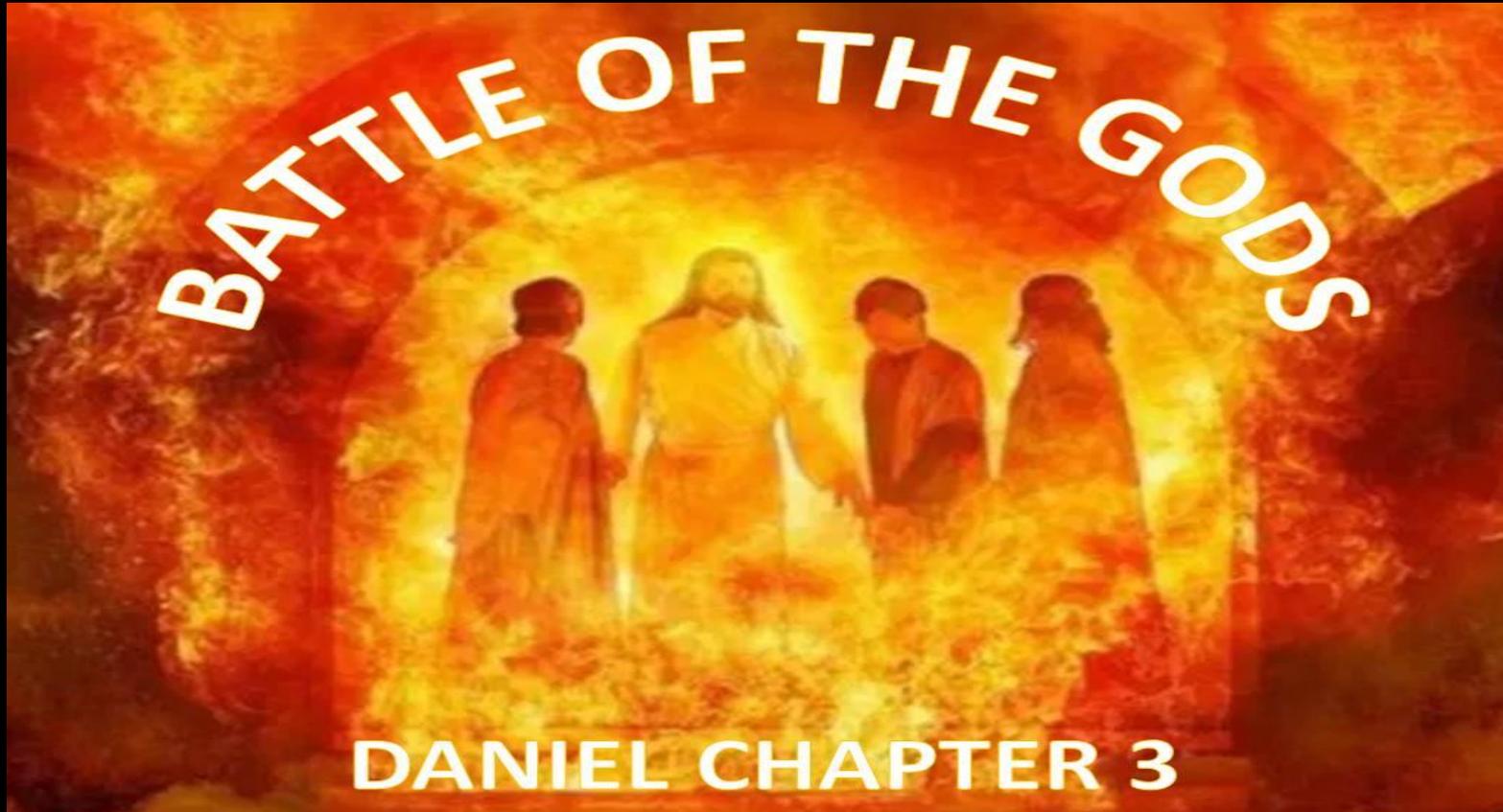


Daniel Chapter 3 - Part 2

From Furnace to Palace



Past > **Present** > **Future**



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**Learn from the Past > Understand the Present >
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Enter The Ark of Hope

The Great Controversy between God and
Satan is primarily over

“WORSHIP”

Who will you Choose?



Get into the Ark **Sanctuary**



**And let them
make me a
sanctuary;
that I may dwell
among them.**

– Exodus 25:8

Psalms 77:13



Health Snippet – Hydrotherapy: Hot Bath

HOT TUB HEALTH BENEFITS

There are different ways in which you can use a hot tub or a Jacuzzi to aid injury recovery & improve health & well-being. Your hot tub should be run around 36°C to 38°C for 15- 20 min spells to help muscles recover, tone and revitalise your body.

Benefits: Boost Immune System, Detoxify, De-stress, Calorie burn, Cardio-vascular health, Insulin sensitivity, Pain relief, etc.

Hot Tub & SPA Exercises:

ABDOMINAL EXERCISE - Leaning back in tub, breathe in slowly, when breathing out contract abdominal muscles softly.

Repeat 5 times to start, working up to 10 sets when confident.

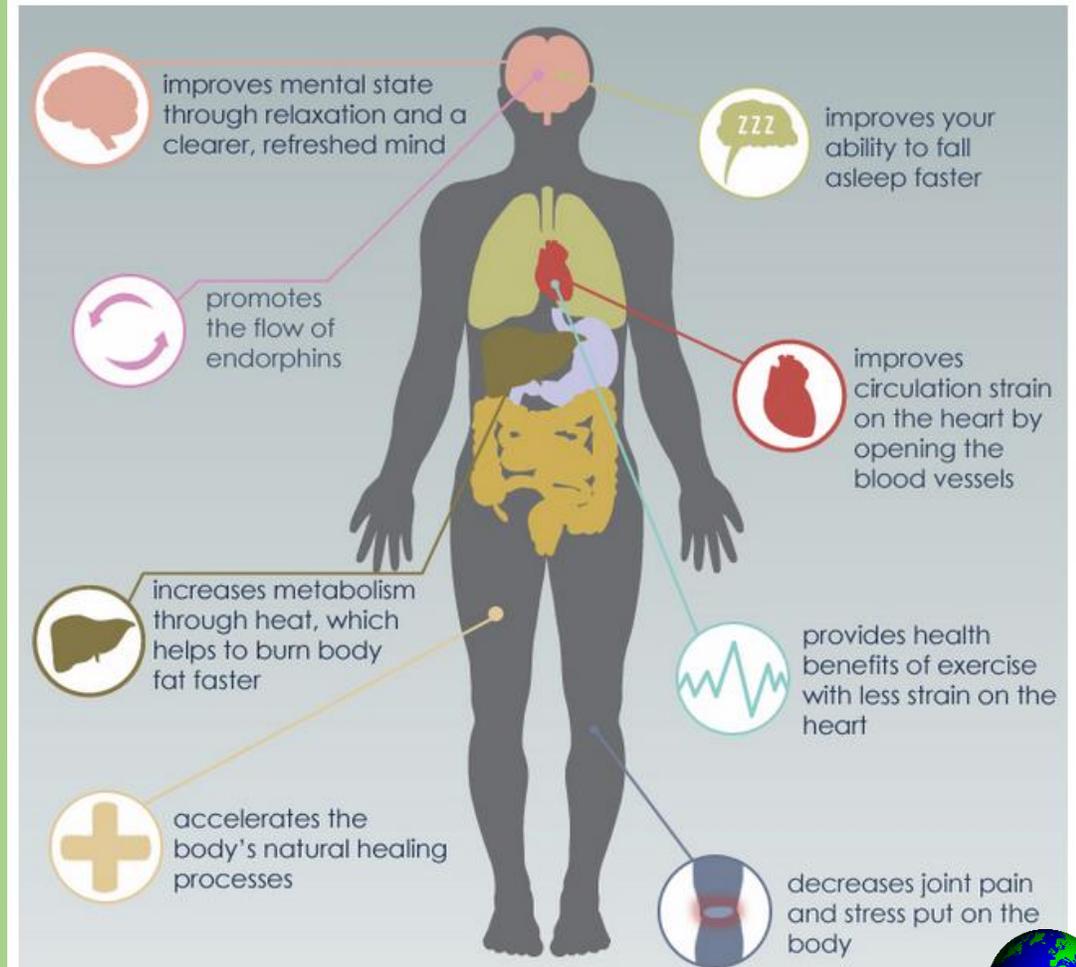
LEG EXERCISE - Leaning back in tub, breathing slowly bring one leg into your body slowly and then extend. Repeat this exercise 3 times to on each leg and up to 5 sets of this per leg.

SHOULDERS AND NECK EXERCISE - Leaning back in tub slowly breathing deeply, rotate your shoulders in a circular motion, forwards & backwards. Pause between set & repeat 10 times.

- Then work your neck from side to side, up to five times.
- Now take time to close your eyes and focus on breathing.

Who Should Avoid: (*seek Medical help*) Heart disease, Urinary tract infection, Skin injury, Pregnancy, Low blood pressure, etc

Health Benefits of Hot Tubs



Can We Trust Bible Prophecy?



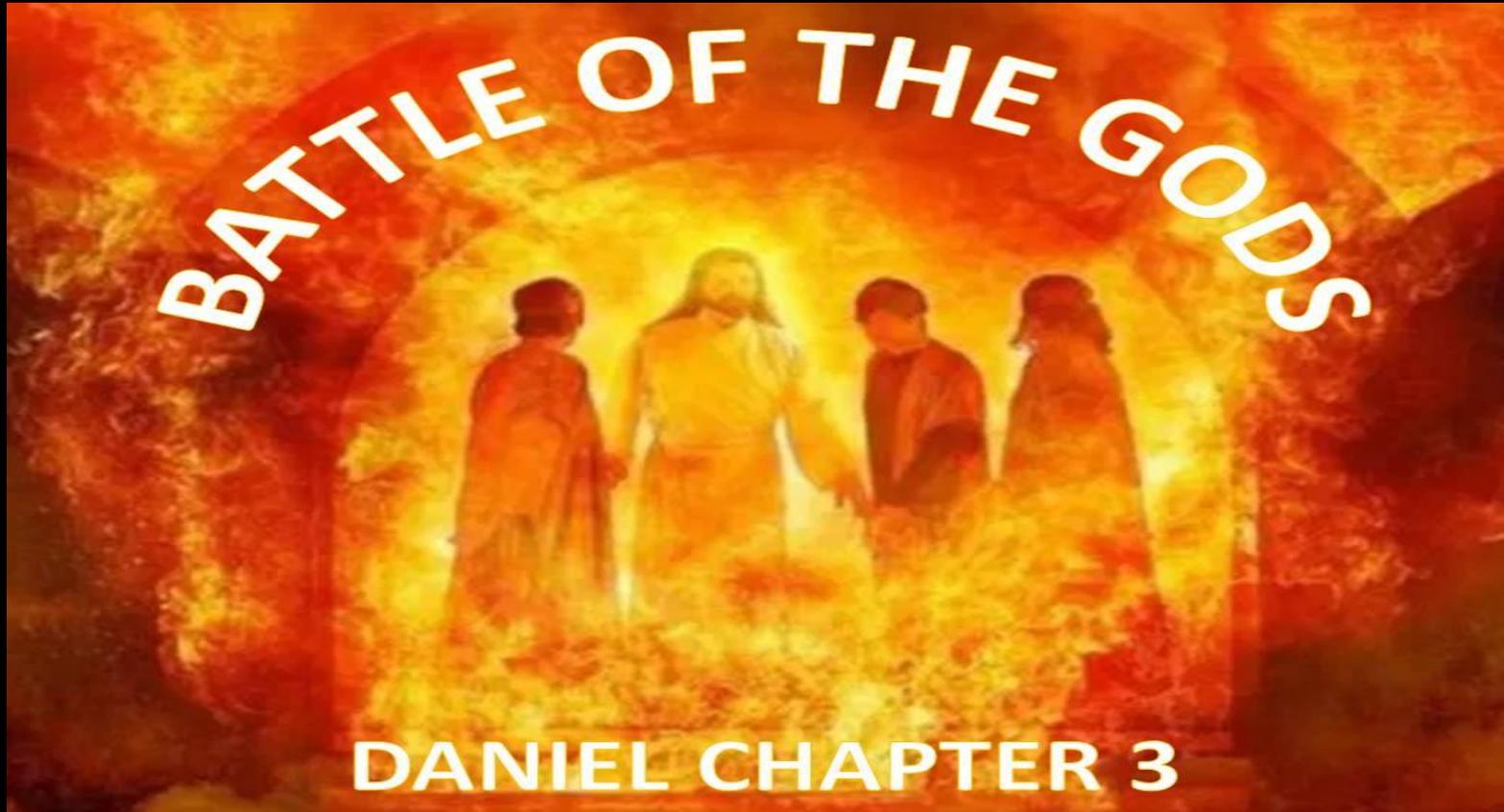
Yes we Can!

*And if he that hath the issue spit upon him that is clean; then he shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.
-Leviticus 15:8 KJV*



Daniel Chapter 3 - Part 2

From Furnace to Palace



Past > **Present** > **Future**



Introduction – The Issue of Worship

Nebuchadnezzar seems to have understood quite well the message conveyed by the multi-metal statue of his dream. **He did not want to be only the head of gold. He wanted his kingdom to be the entire statue from head to toe.**

In pursuit of this goal, he attempted to usurp the attributes of the Creator. **So, in making an image (Hebrew: tselem), the king ironically imitated God's act of creating humanity as an image (tselem) of Himself (Genesis 1:26, 27).**

So Nebuchadnezzar, consumed by arrogance, built an image. But that was not a simple work of art; it was an object of worship.

And the accusation levelled against the three exiles was that they did not worship the gold image nor serve Nebuchadnezzar's gods (Daniel 3:12, 14). The plural "gods" suggests that the image may have been a representation of the Babylonian "gods" and not only that of a single deity.



Nebuchadnezzar
the king made
an image of

Gold

Daniel 3:1

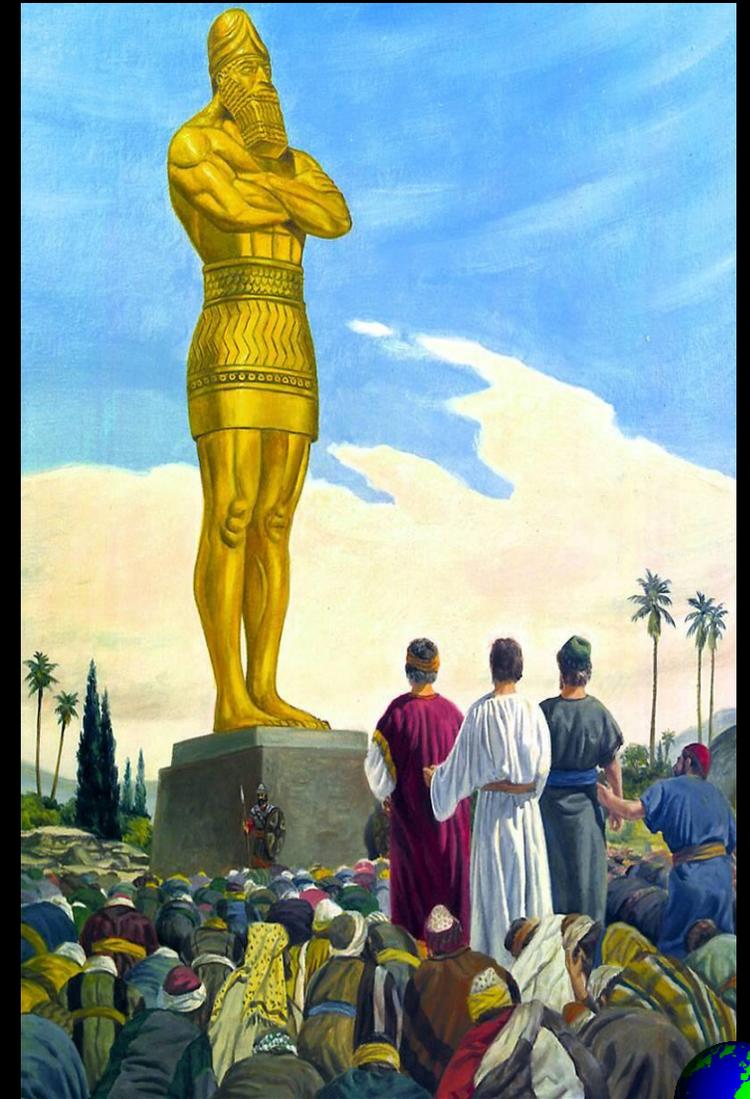


Introduction - The Issue of Worship (cont'd)

The measurements of the image (60 x 6 cubits) evoke the sexagesimal system of Babylon, as opposed to the decimal system followed in Egypt. Moreover, the proportions of the image (10:1) indicate that it did not follow the normal proportions of a human figure (5:1 or 6:1). So unless it was a figure that included a large pedestal, it may have looked more like a gigantic pillar or stele and may have been only partially sculpted.

In promoting such a liturgical event, the king may have intended to secure the allegiance of governors, ministers, etc., to the program and ideology of the empire.

In the ancient world, religion and politics were tightly intertwined. So patriotism was expressed by means of adoration of the national gods. Hence, the refusal of the three exiles to worship the gold image was not only an act of religious dissension, but an open rejection of the totalitarian claims of the Babylonian political and religious ideology. The Hebrew captives never would give to the empire what was due to God only.



Setting the Stage -The Issue of Faithfulness

In a warning against idolatry, Moses reminded the Israelites that the “only worthy recipient of Israel’s worship was the God who had brought them out of ‘the iron-smelting furnace, out of Egypt,’ so they could be his inheritance (Deuteronomy 4:20; 1 Kings 8:51; Jeremiah 11:4). Moses implored the people to keep the covenant and, again, not to make any kind of idol. In this second reminder, Moses said the reason they should not succumb to idolatry was because their God ‘is a consuming fire, a jealous God’ (Deuteronomy 4:24). Seeing into Israel’s future, Moses told the people if (and when) they did fall into idolatry, God would drive them out of the promised land into lands where idolatry was the order of the day. If the people returned to worship and obey God alone, He would not abandon or destroy them. He would remember His covenant. God had saved them from the furnace of Egyptian bondage to make them His own. In return He required their faithful and exclusive worship.” —Wendy Widder, Daniel (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2016), p. 65.

Deuteronomy 4:20

But the LORD has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, from Egypt, to be a people for His own possession, as today.



"For the LORD thy God is a
consuming fire, even a jealous
God"
Deuteronomy 4:24



Setting the Stage - The Issue of Faithfulness (cont'd)

The Hebrew captives took no opportunity to rationalize away their commitment to the true God. They could have simply rationalized their decision in order to avoid a confrontation with the king: "Let's just bow down to this image, but in our hearts, we'll remain faithful to God. **Who cares if we bow down!**" But they did not act that way. It bears mentioning that in the polytheistic environment of the ancient Near East, no deity demanded exclusive loyalty. One could be a devotee of Marduk and also worship, say, Ishtar. Before the exile, many Israelites fell into this trap. They worshiped the Lord, but, at the same time, they sacrificed to Baal and other deities whom they presumed to be more helpful to them in certain areas of life. Only the covenant God of the Hebrews demanded exclusivity from His worshipers (Exodus 20:3–5, Deuteronomy 6:4); and the Hebrew captives lived up to this demand.



Daniel 3:19-23 – Thrown in the Fire

Daniel 3:19 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.

The reaction of the king is noteworthy:

Ellen White vividly describes the face of Nebuchadnezzar after the young men spoke: “Satanic attributes made his countenance appear as the countenance of a demon.” – BC V. 4 p. 1169



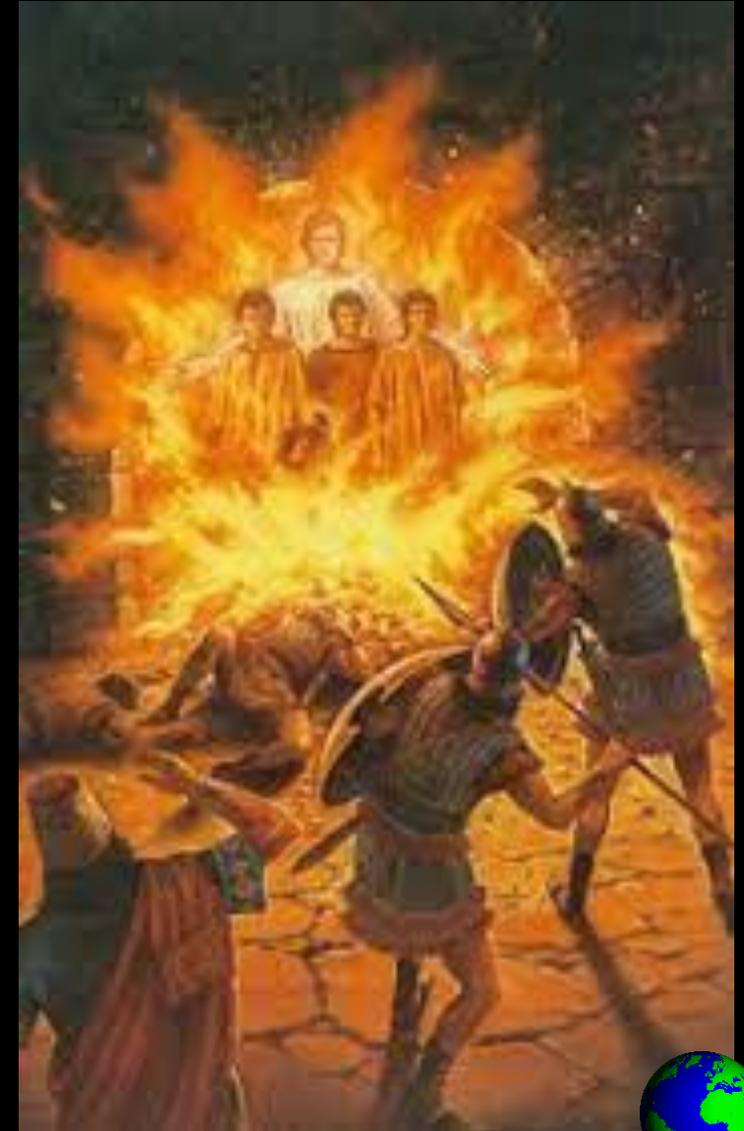
Examining the Verses...

Nebuchadnezzar full of fury - When the king heard this reply he went into a rage of anger, so much so that his whole visage/countenance was changed. Here was a man at the head of the world, full of power, yet unable to control the will of these young men. This was too much for him to take, for this was straight out wilful disobedience to his will.

Seven times hotter - Set on their utter destruction and full of fury, the king orders the furnace to be heated seven times hotter, or in other words to its maximum temperature. The fuel used was crude oil and chaff.

Most mighty men - The king ordered that the mightiest men of his army were to bind them and cast them into the furnace raging with heat. So the mighty men bound them and cast them into the fiery furnace clothes and all.

Because the king's commandment was urgent - All the king was worried about was the destruction of those who were rebelling against him. But because his commandment was so urgent and the furnace exceeding hot, the flames slew the mightiest men as they threw them in.



Something Unusual Anticipated

When the king saw that his will was not received as the will of God, he was “full of fury,” and the form of his visage was changed against these men. Satanic attributes made his countenance appear as the countenance of a demon; and with all the force he could command, he ordered that the furnace be heated seven times hotter than its was, and commanded the most mighty men to bind the youth, and cast them into the furnace. He felt that it required more than ordinary power to deal with these noble men.

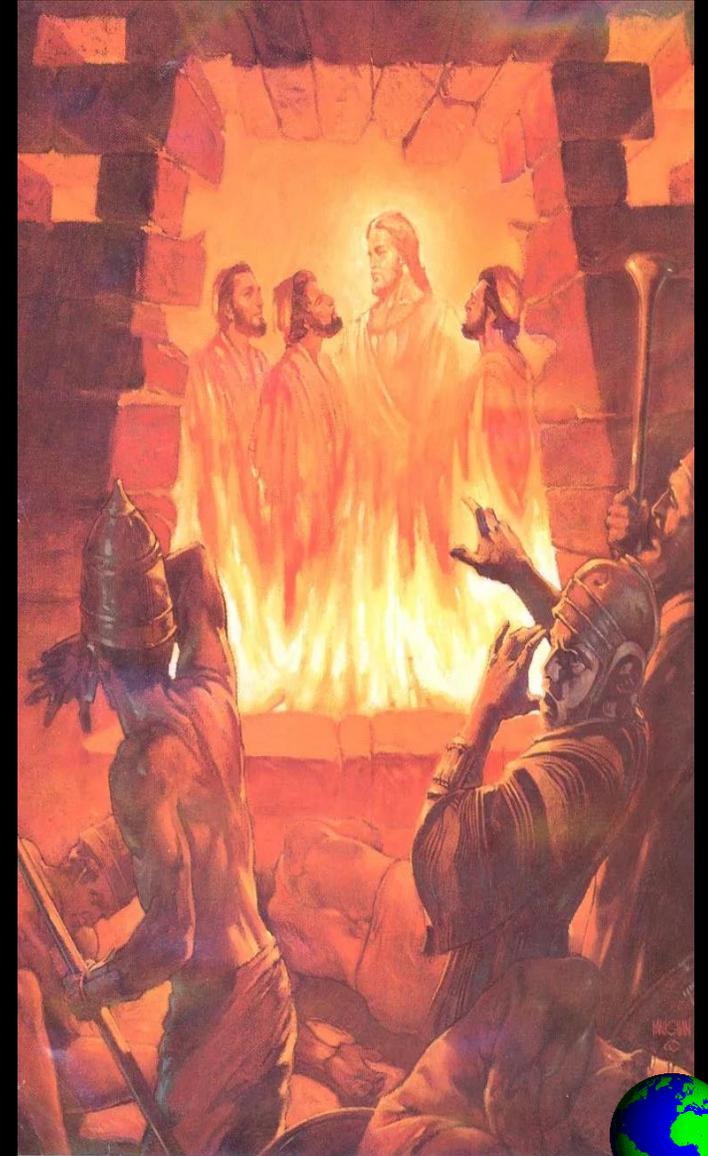
His mind was strongly impressed that something unusual would interpose in their behalf, and his strongest men were ordered to deal with them - 4BC 1169.6

God would shortly answer this charge: “I will deliver them.”

The Husband would protect his bride, the Shepherd would protect his sheep, the Head would care for the body and the Sovereign would keep his covenant with His servants.

The same mistake was made by Pharaoh.

He had said: “I do not know Yahweh and I will not let His people go.” He challenged the God of heaven and the Lord fought for Israel and delivered them.



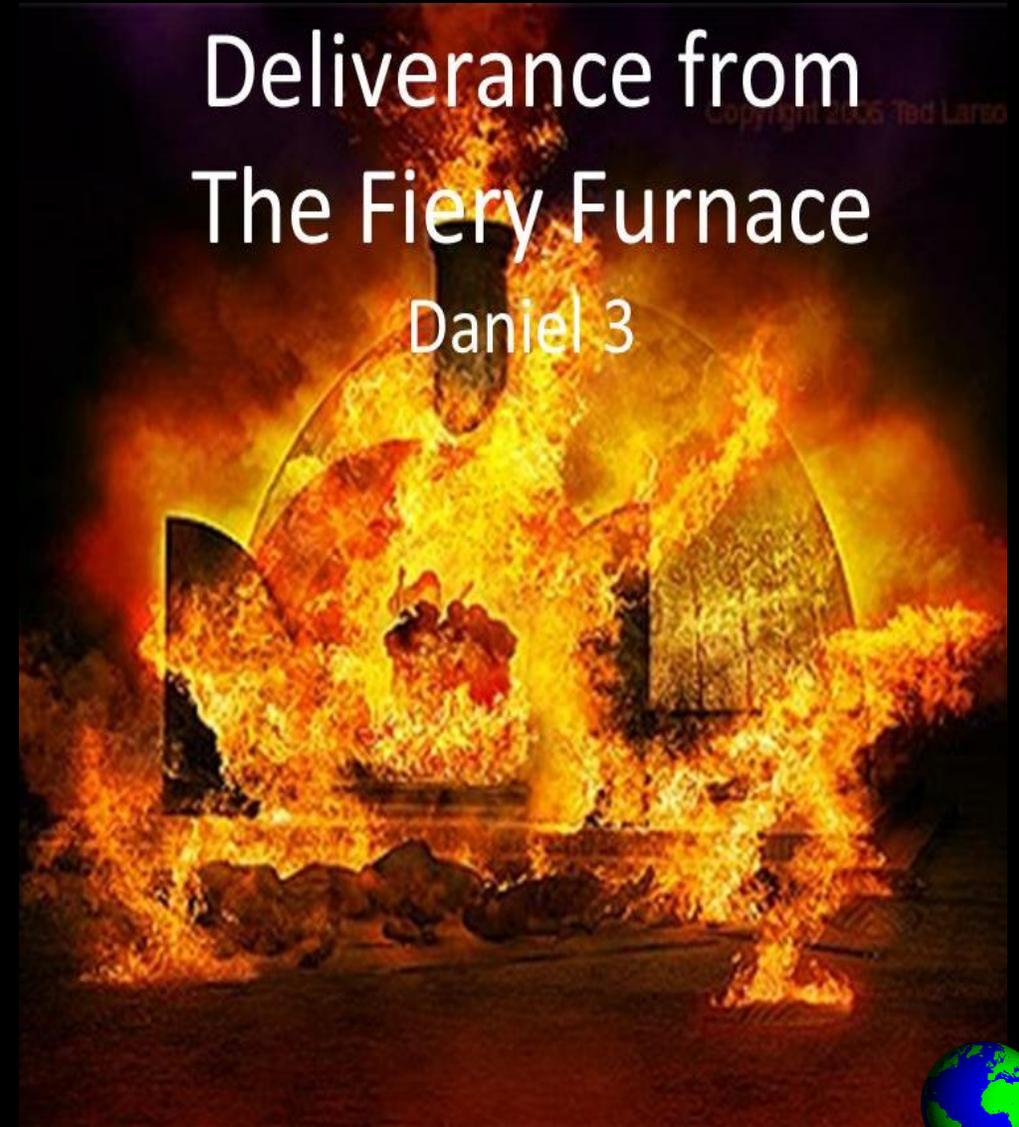
Furnace heated seven times hotter

The number 7 indicates that the furnace was heated to the maximum heat because the number 7 represents totality or completeness. This was a manifestation of the fullness of the king's wrath.

The furnace represents affliction by which God purifies his people (Isaiah 48:10, 11; Psalm 12:6; 13:12; Job 23:10; Isaiah 33:14-16; Malachi 3:2, 3; Revelation 3:18). The faith of the three worthies was severely tested but they came forth as pure gold. Their faith was also a witness that brought honor and glory to the true God before the all the nations of the world.

The young men claimed the promise of Isaiah 43:2.

The young men did not form their character in the crisis. Their character was exhibited in the crisis. Their faithfulness in Daniel 1 in the small things prepared them to pass greater tests.



Lessons for us to Learn

In the verse, the king has the furnace heated seven times hotter! Notice that God doesn't keep His children from the fiery furnace. He doesn't promise to keep His people from trials and troubles.

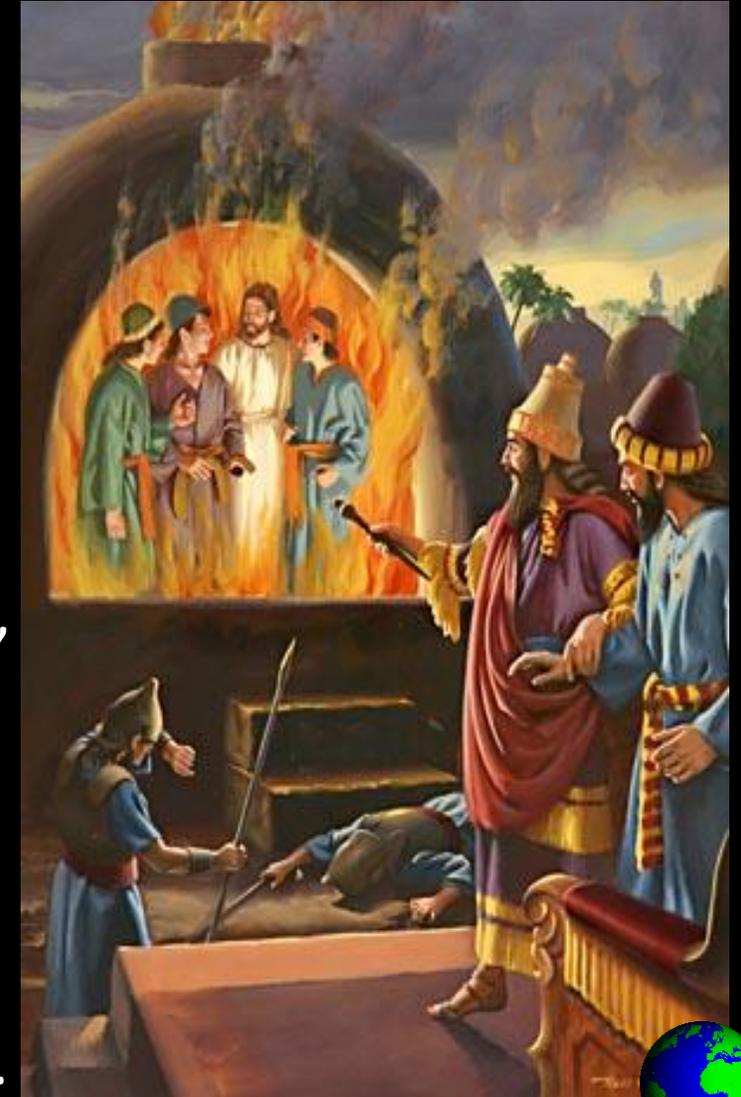
Rather, He promises to be with them through the trial and troubles. And like the three Hebrews, in the end He will preserve them for Himself.

Notice God's special promises in "Time of Trouble":

- a. [Jeremiah 42:11](#) *"For I am with you to save you, and to deliver you from his hand."*
- b. [Hebrews 13:5-8](#) *"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."*
- c. [Matthew 28:18-20](#) *"and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."*

2 Key Points:

1. **They are thrown in bound.**
2. The soldiers who have attacked God's people are destroyed by the fire. God's people are preserved in the fire.



Christ is the Centre of this story, not the 3 young men!!

Christ Himself stood up to deliver His faithful remnant in the midst of the time of trouble ([Daniel 3:25](#))

"Look!" he answered, "I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

"As His witnesses were cast into the furnace, the Saviour revealed Himself to them in person, and together they walked in the midst of the fire." - [Prophets and Kings](#) , pp. 508, 509

Notice that the king described the Son of God as an Angel, that is, Michael the Archangel ([Daniel 3:25, 28](#)) or the Angel of the LORD.

How did the king know what the Son of God looked like:
Ellen White responds:

"The Hebrew captives had told Nebuchadnezzar of Christ, the Redeemer that was to come, and from the description thus given the king recognized the form of the fourth in the fiery furnace as the Son of God." - [Christ Triumphant](#), p. 178



The literal in past is Spiritual in End-times

The word 'deliver' is used in certain strategic parts of the chapter (Daniel 3:15, 17, 28, 29).

An Important Principle

Literal Israel was literally captive in literal Babylon, the literal king behaved like a literal beast, set up a literal image, commanding everyone to literally bow and worship it; literal Jews refused to literally bow and therefore were thrown into a literal fiery furnace and were delivered from the literal flames.

But in the end time application that which was literal and local in the Old Testament story will be worldwide and spiritual at the end of time.



This History will repeat itself...

The power which will rule the world in the end-time will be spiritual and global Babylon ([Revelation 14:8; 16:12-16, 19; 17:1, 2, 5, 18, 21](#))

Babylon will once again present a counterfeit prophetic scenario wanting to establish a new world order different than the new world order which Jesus has promised to establish.

The arrogance of Babylon in the end time will be no less than in the days of Daniel. In [Revelation 18:7](#) end time Babylon boasts:

'I sit as queen, and [I] am no widow, and will not see sorrow.'

In [Isaiah 47:7](#) Babylon boasts: *'I shall be a lady forever'*. And in verse 8 she blasphemously claims the title that belongs only to Yahweh, the great 'I AM': *'I am, and there is no one else besides me; I shall not sit as a widow, nor shall I know the loss of children'*.

At the very end of human history, the Papacy, apostate Protestantism and the kings of the earth will unite to establish a New World Order such as was envisioned by the builders of the Tower of Babel (see [Genesis 11:1-9](#)).

The second coming of Jesus as the solution to the world's problems will be cast aside and men will attempt to establish a golden age on earth that will stand forever.



The Last Call – Come out of her my people

Revelation 18:4 - *And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.*

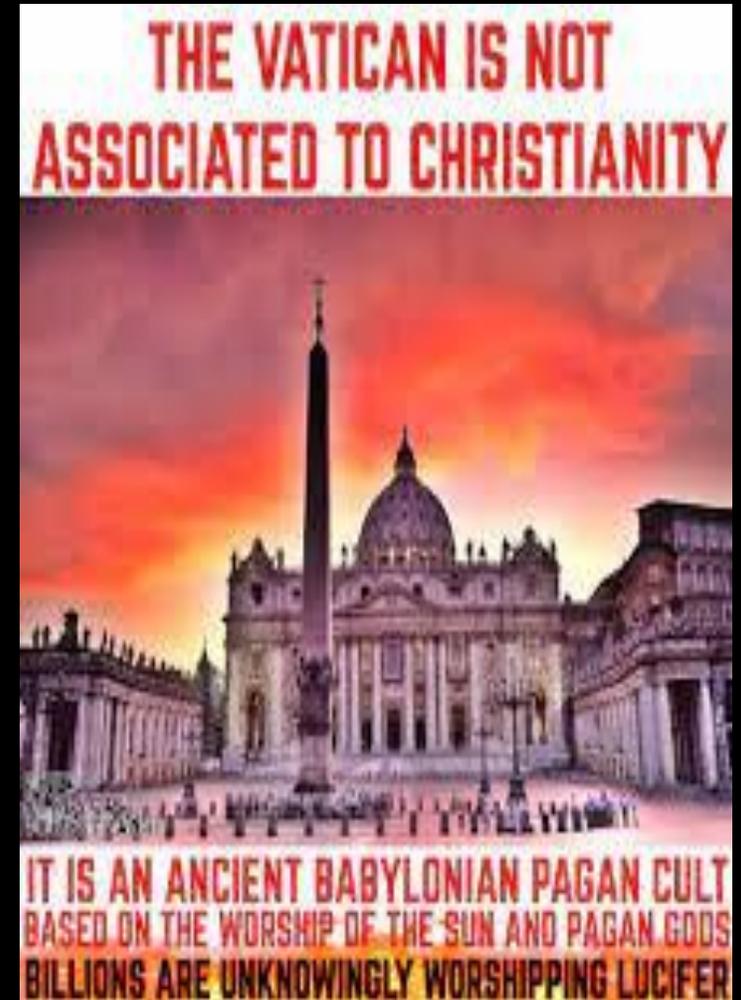
“Of Babylon, at the time brought to view in this prophecy, it is declared: *“Her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.”* - Revelation 18:5.

She has filled up the measure of her guilt, and destruction is about to fall upon her. But God still has a people in Babylon; and before the visitation of His judgments these faithful ones must be called out, that they partake not of her sins and “receive not of her plagues.”

Hence the movement symbolized by the angel coming down from heaven, lightening the earth with his glory and crying mightily with a strong voice, announcing.

The sins of Babylon. In connection with his message the call is heard: **“Come out of her, My people.”**

These announcements, uniting with the third angel's message, constitute the final warning to be given to the inhabitants of the earth.” - *The Great Controversy*, p. 604



Daniel 3:24-25 – King recognises Jesus

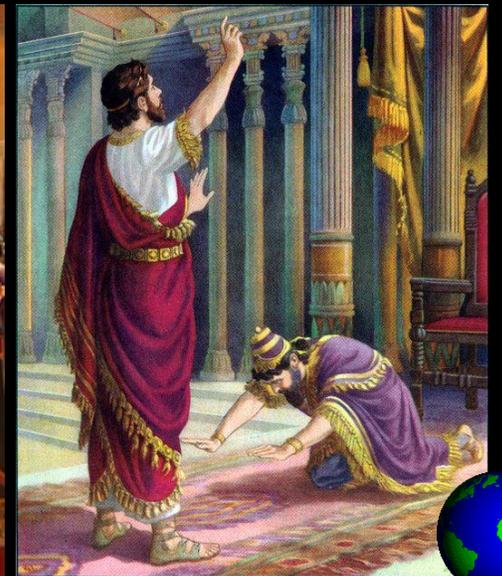
Daniel 3:24 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king.

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.

Nebuchadnezzar makes an amazing statement, "The form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

How would the king recognize Jesus-the Son of God? As we have studied the first three chapters from the book of Daniel, we have seen that Daniel, Hananiah, Meshael, and Azariah have all been faithful to their God, even in the face of death decrees.

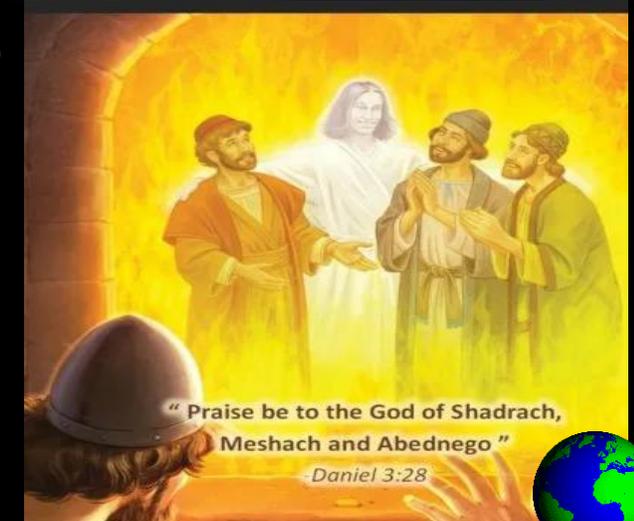
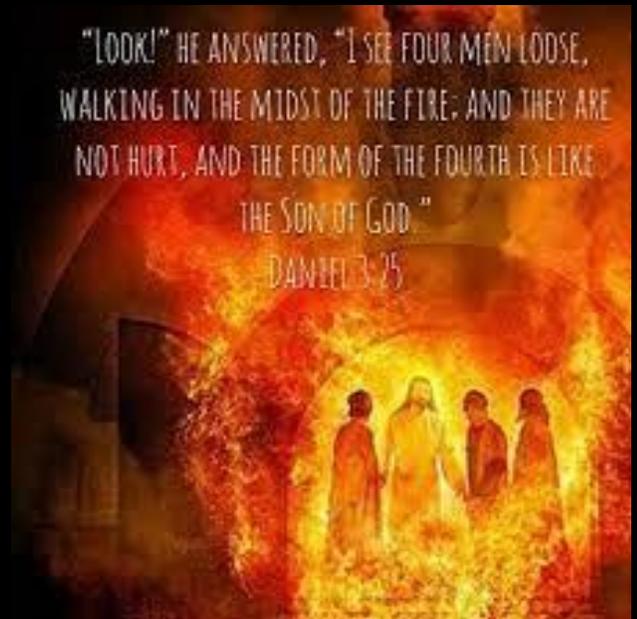
By exemplifying His character, they gave king Nebuchadnezzar a picture of God.



Christ Revealed by Captives

How did Nebuchadnezzar know that the form of the fourth was like the Son of God? He had heard of the Son of God from the Hebrew captives that were in his kingdom. **They had brought the knowledge of the living God who ruleth all things.** - 4BC 1169.7

Associates Understood Faith — These faithful Hebrews possessed great natural ability and intellectual culture, and they occupied a high position of honor; but all these advantages did not lead them to forget God. All their powers were yielded to the sanctifying influence of divine grace. By their godly example, their steadfast integrity, they showed forth the praises of Him who had called them out of darkness into His marvellous light. **In their wonderful deliverance was displayed, before that vast assembly, the power and majesty of God.** Jesus placed Himself by their side in the fiery furnace, and by the glory of His presence convinced the proud king of Babylon that it could be no other than the Son of God. The light of heaven had been shining forth from Daniel and his companions, until all their associates understood the faith which ennobled their lives and beautified their characters. -4BC 1170.1

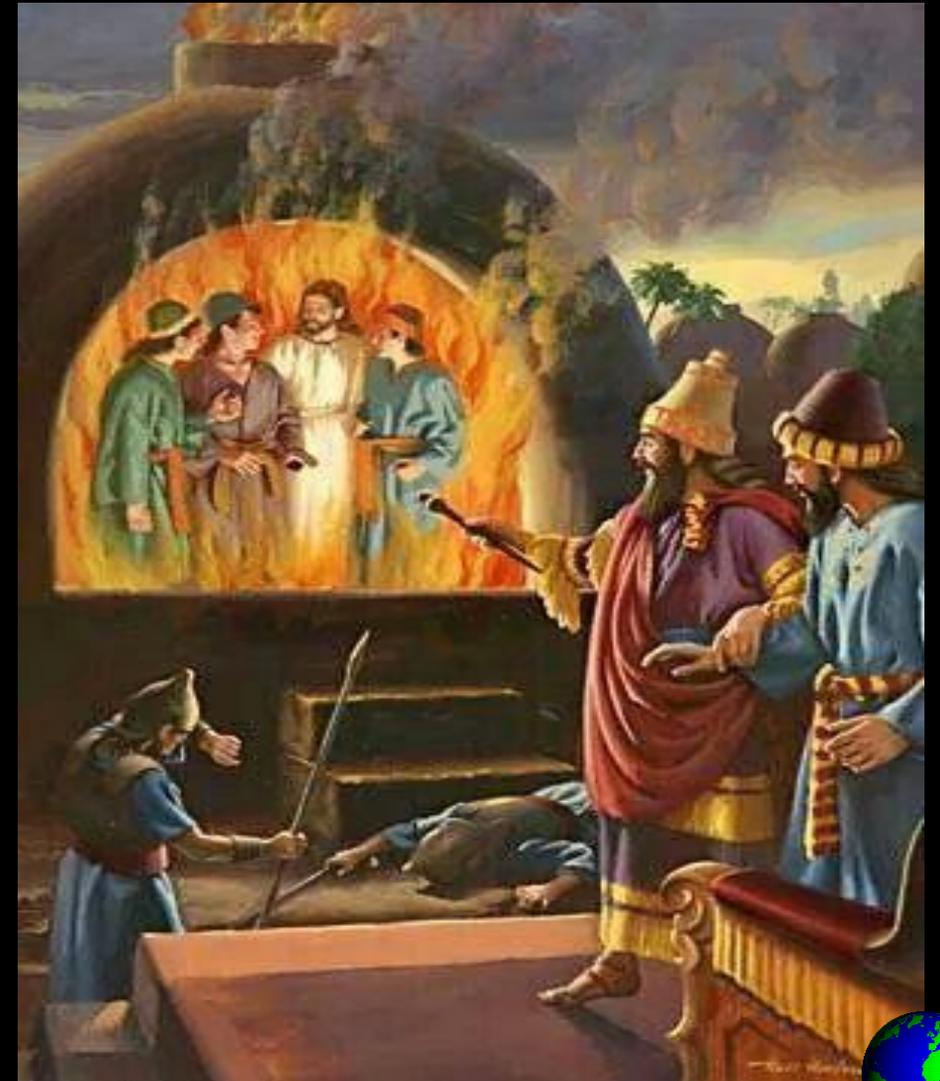


Examining these verses...

Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished -
After they had been thrown in, something caught the king's eye that amazed him and he quickly stood up. Speaking to his councillors he asks them what appears to be a rather strange question: **did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?** Of course the answer comes back as true for all had seen the three of them cast into the fire.

I see four men loose - Nebuchadnezzar had a good reason for asking the question he had. For the reason why he was astonished was that he saw four people walking around in the midst of the fire and not three. **None of them had any hurt.**

Fourth is like the Son of God - **The Lord did not forget His own.** As His witnesses were cast into the furnace, the Saviour revealed Himself to them in person, and together they walked in the midst of the fire. In the presence of the Lord of heat and cold, the flames lost their power to consume.



Thrown into the fire!!

Hard to imagine, isn't it? To see three healthy and hearty men seized and tossed into the raging fire of the furnace prepared to kill them. What beautiful miracle took place just then? **Do you ever wonder how those men felt when they landed in the furnace but instead of being burned to death, what was their experience?**

True or False: All who trust in God and worship Him will be spared persecution and other harmful acts of Satan?

The faith of the three men:

What important lesson did Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego leave for us today?

Does God's answers to our prayers assure us that we're on the heavenward path?

Did these three men know that their faith in God would be rewarded as it was?

If not, why did they continue in their obedience to Him?

What is the lesson for you and me in this story?



Daniel 3:26-27 – Come forth Out

Daniel 3:26 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.

“But the Lord did not forget His own. As His witnesses were cast into the furnace, the Saviour revealed Himself to them in person, and together they walked in the midst of the fire. In the presence of the Lord of heat and cold, the flames lost their power to consume”.

— Prophets and Kings, pp. 508, 509.



Examining these verses...

Come forth, and come hither - Nebuchadnezzar came near the mouth of the furnace and calls for them to come out. He calls them the servants of the most high God, as he has seen their God is an all powerful God to be able to save them from the fire, and they were willing to serve Him even in the face of death.

Why did they not come out when the fire burnt the ropes that bound them? Well the Psalmist said "in thy presence is the fullness of joy" Psalms 16:11, so why would they wish to come out and leave the presence of God, in which is the fullness of joy? Plus they had not been asked to come out prior to this.

Came forth of the midst of the fire - They came out with all the princes, governors, captains, and the king's counsellors looking on. Each of them were untouched by the fire, even to the point that not a thing even smelt of the fire.

The mightiest men were slain by the fire, yet the three were not. The furnace was heated seven times hotter but it only served to show a greater extent of the power of God to deliver. The impression upon the minds of the onlookers must have been remarkable.

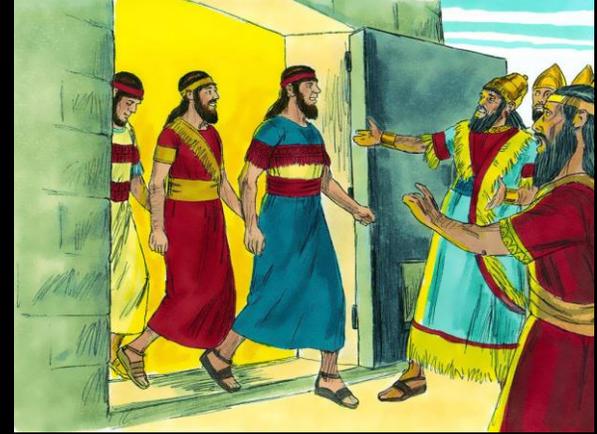


The King is speechless!!

The king cannot say much more, but we do know who that fourth person is. He appears to Abraham before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, wrestles with Jacob beside the brook Jabbok, and reveals Himself to Moses in a burning bush. **He is Jesus Christ in a pre-incarnate form, coming to show that God stands with His people in their troubles.**

As God says in Isaiah, *“When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.”* - [Isaiah 43:2](#).

Though we love stories like these, they do raise the question about others who are not miraculously delivered from persecution for their faith. Those men surely know the experience of Isaiah and Zechariah, who are put to death by impious kings. **All through sacred history, even to our day, faithful Christians have endured terrible suffering that ended for them, at least here, not in a miraculous deliverance but in a painful death. Here is one case in which the faithful receive a miraculous deliverance but, as we know, such things don't usually happen.**



Only the Righteous can live in the presence of God's fiery Glory!

Many times when God appeared in the Old Testament, we see the glory of His presence referred to as a burning fire, a smoking furnace, or a consuming fire.

Examples:

Genesis 15:17 God appears to Abraham as a smoking furnace

Genesis 19:24-28 God rained "fire and brimstone" (literally He rained "from" God—"out of" God.)

Exodus 3:3-4 God is in the "burning bush" that doesn't burn up.

Exodus 13:21 God led the Israelites from a pillar of fire by night.

Exodus 19:18 God descended upon Mt. Zion as a smoking fiery furnace.

Exodus 24:17 And the sight of the glory of the Lord was like a devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel.

Hebrews 12:29 Our God is a consuming fire.



The Power Of God Seen

When the Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out of the fiery furnace every one witnessed the power of God.

Verse 27 says, "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." **What a testimony to the power of God!** Does this mean that if we were called to go into the fire for Jesus, that He would save us after this manner? **One thing is for sure, He is able!** But our trust and obedience can't be only if He spares me. **We need to be willing to die for Him, and leaving the saving up to Him!**

Why wasn't Nebuchadnezzar killed when he walked close to the furnace? **His soldiers had just been killed when they threw the three men into the fire.** **Answer:** **Nebuchadnezzar was being drawn to God.** He was beginning to undergo a conversion in his heart. He was being "drawn to the light" of God's glory, therefore, God preserved him. **The soldiers were not being drawn to God, and the fire killed them.**

John 8:12 – Jesus is the "Light of the world." **John 3:16-21** – We are either drawn to the light, or we love darkness.



Who will stand at the 2nd Coming!

At the second coming of Christ, If, we do NOT love and obey God, the light of His glory will devour and destroy us. On the other hand, if we love and obey God, we will live in the light of His glory for eternity.

Isaiah 33:14 *The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?*

15 *He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil;*

16 *He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.*

17 *Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off.*

Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire?

Who among us shall dwell with the everlasting burnings?

The Bible says that the righteous will be able to stand in the very presence of God.



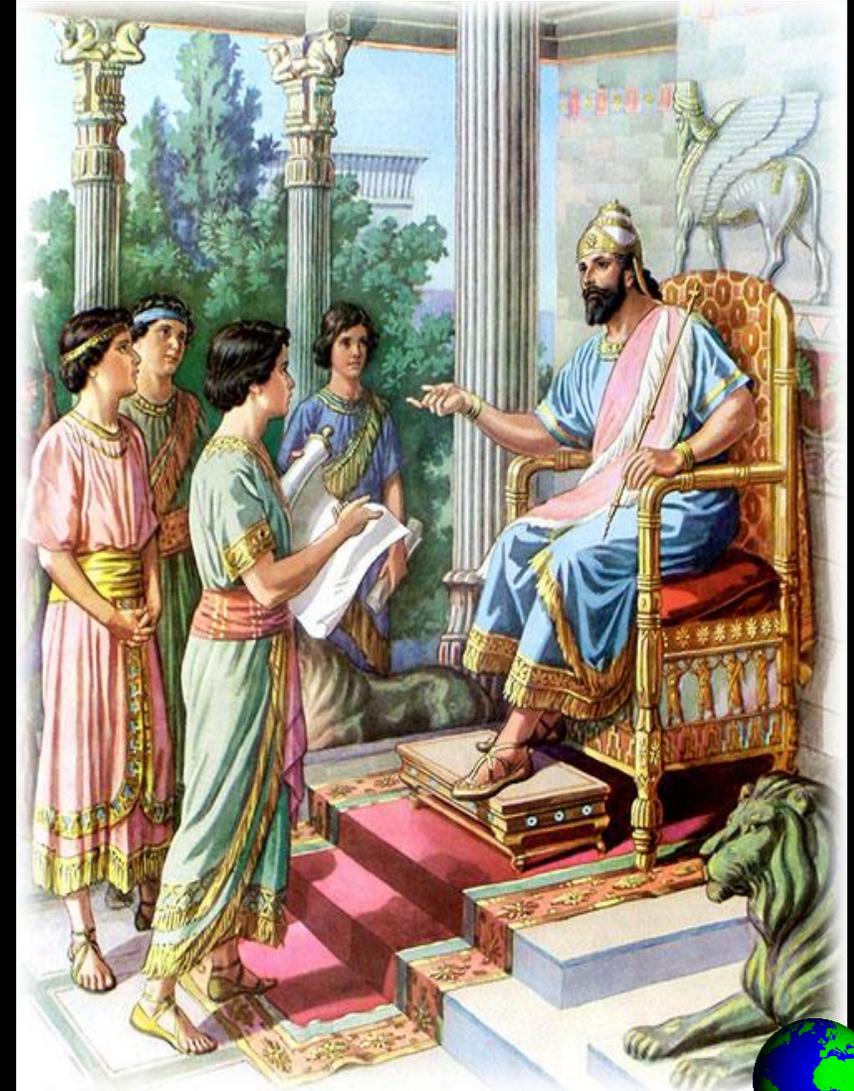
Daniel 3:28-30 – Faithful ones lifted up

Daniel 3:28 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.

Nebuchadnezzar realizes that there is a God that is ultimately in control, and can change the words of even the king to allow His servants to worship Him and not worship any other god. **The king therefore reinstates them into their positions in the kingdom of Babylon.**

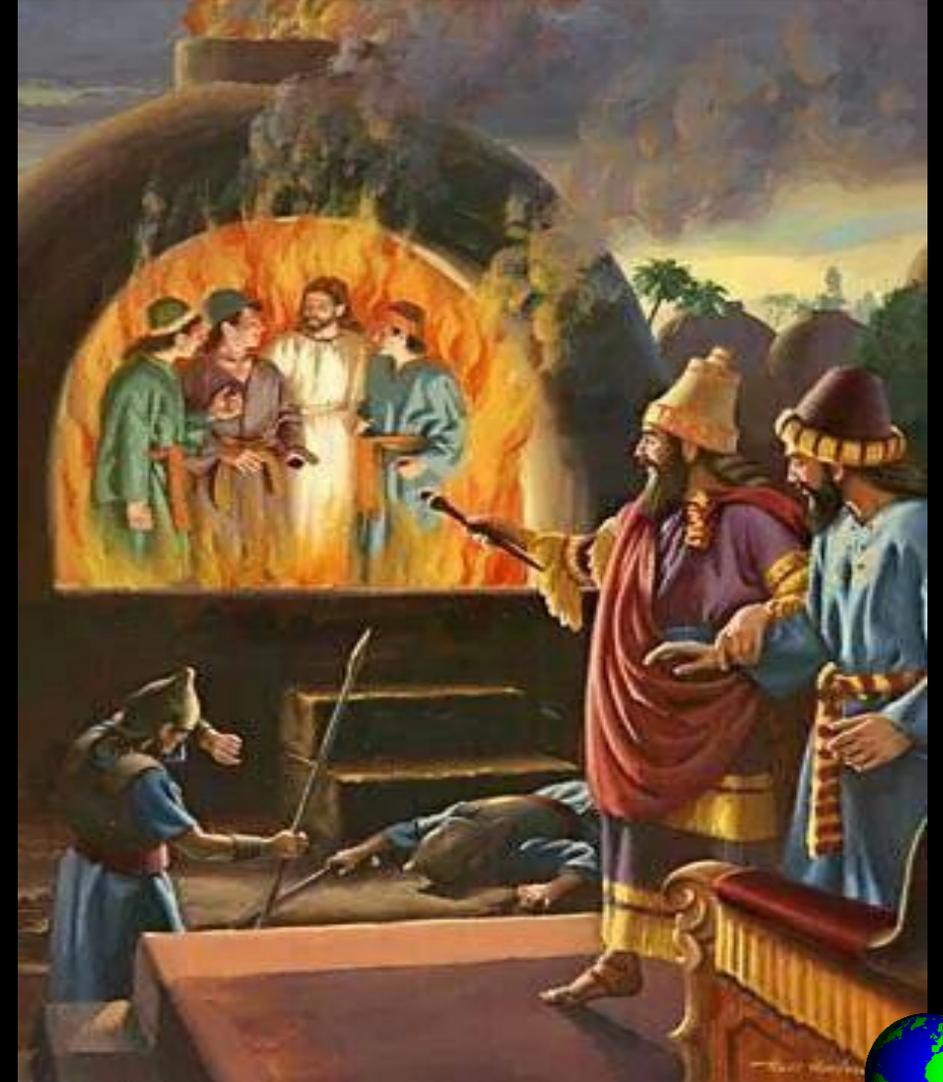


The King receives his answer

The king recognized that the true God of Heaven had answered his question, “**Who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands**”?

- He is the Author and the Finisher, the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, He is able to do as He sees is best.

We see that Nebuchadnezzar acknowledges the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. But he still doesn't fully get the picture. **Now he tries to Legislate religion again.** But an important point is that God doesn't legislate or demand worship! He calls out of love, and showed us His love first, by dying on the cross for the right to save us! **Also, we see that God's children are blessed in the end.** God doesn't always save us from the trials of this life, like He did for Hananiah, Meshael & Azariah. But, those who love and serve God faithfully will be blessed, and in the end, saved to live with Jesus forever!



The King still forces – True worship!

The whole affair was to be taken back to the entire kingdom through the leaders that came from afar, as the king had bid them to come. **But the king himself makes a decree to have not a person say anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.** From this we can see that the king's attitude to worship is still the same, forced.

- To decree is to force.

Friends, we need to stand true to God even in the face of death, and obey God rather than man. If we do, God will honour us as He did the three worthies, and confess our names before the Father in heaven. (**Matthew 10:32**)

There is a reward that awaits those who stand for the truth.

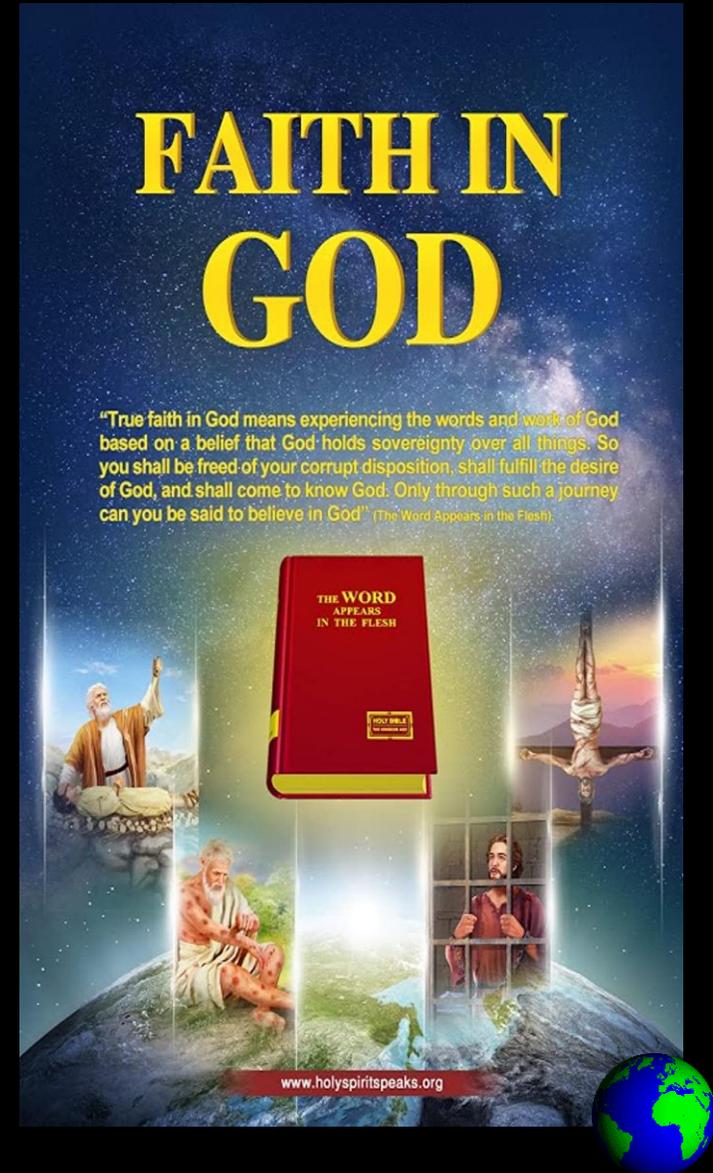
As we reflect on the experience of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, we may ask ourselves: **What is the secret of so strong a faith? How could they have been willing to burn alive rather than worship the image?** Think about all the ways that they could have rationalized bowing in submission to the orders of the king. And yet, despite realizing that they could have died, as so many others had done, they nevertheless stand firm.



What does it teach us about what faith is?

In order to develop such a faith, we need to understand what faith is. Some people have a quantitative perception of faith; they measure their faith by the answers they seem to receive from God. They go to the shopping mall and they pray for a parking space. If they happen to get a space upon arrival, they conclude that they have strong faith. If all the slots are filled, they may think their faith is not strong enough for God to listen to their prayers. This understanding of faith becomes dangerous because it attempts to manipulate God and does not reckon with God's sovereignty and wisdom.

Indeed, true faith, as manifested by Daniel's friends, is measured by the quality of our relationship with God and its resulting absolute confidence in God. Authentic faith does not seek to bend God's will to conform to our will; rather, it surrenders our will to the will of God. As we saw, the three Hebrew men do not know exactly what God has in store for them when they decide to challenge the king and remain faithful to God. They decide to do the right thing despite the consequences. This is what really characterizes a mature faith. We show real faith when we pray to the Lord for what we want but trust Him to do what's best for us, even if at the time we don't understand what is happening or why.



Faith needed as persecution will come

“Important are the lessons to be learned from the experience of the Hebrew youth on the plain of Dura. In this our day, many of God’s servants, though innocent of wrongdoing, will be given over to suffer humiliation and abuse at the hands of those who, inspired by Satan, are filled with envy and religious bigotry. Especially will the wrath of man be aroused against those who hallow the Sabbath of the fourth commandment; and at last a universal decree will denounce these as deserving of death.

The season of distress before God’s people will call for a faith that will not falter. His children must make it manifest that He is the only object of their worship, and that no consideration, not even that of life itself, can induce them to make the least concession to false worship. To the loyal heart the commands of sinful, finite men will sink into insignificance beside the word of the eternal God. Truth will be obeyed though the result be imprisonment or exile or death”.

- Prophets and Kings, pages 512, 513.

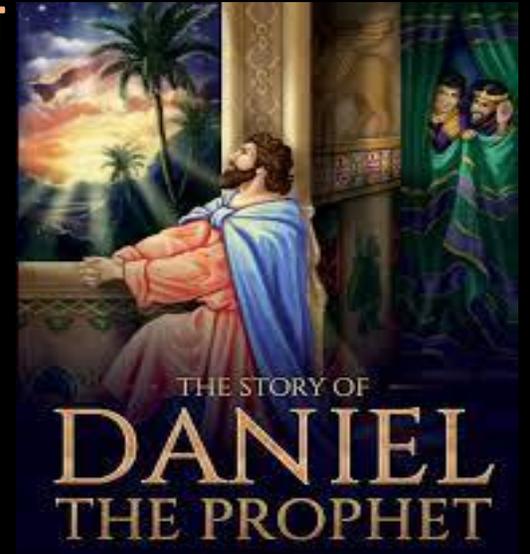


Where was Daniel in all this?

One point that deserves a comment is the conspicuous absence of Daniel. Christian commentators and the Talmud have advanced several hypotheses as to the reason for his absence:

- (1) Daniel was away on business;
- (2) he had permission from the king to withdraw;
- (3) he stood so high with Nebuchadnezzar that no one dared to complain about him;
- (4) his presence may not have been required;
- (5) he may have been sick;
- (6) Daniel was no longer involved in government;
- (7) Daniel was present, and he briefly bowed before the image, but the Lord does not let his name occur here because of his later faithfulness;
- (8) God kept Daniel away so that people would not say “that they were delivered through his merit”;
- (9) Daniel avoided the scene to keep from fulfilling the prophecy that “the graven images of their gods shall ye burn with fire” (Deut. 7:25);
- (10) Nebuchadnezzar “let Daniel depart, lest people say he has burnt his god in fire.”

- This summary is from Peter A. Steveson, Daniel (Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 2008), p. 56.



Points to consider...

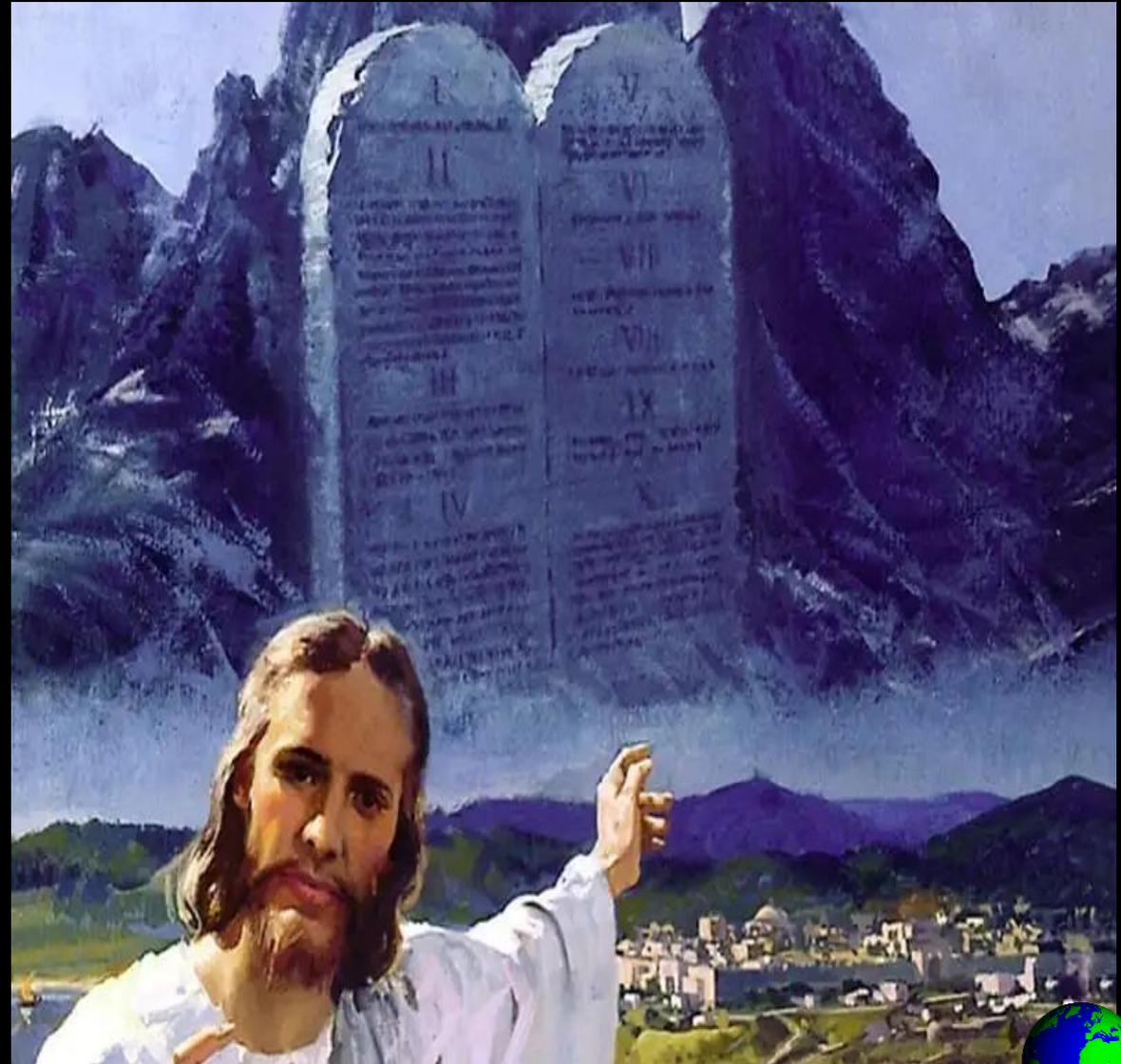
Although some options may seem more reasonable than others, the fact is that we do not know where Daniel was during that time. **But on the basis of Daniel's character as portrayed in Scripture, we can be sure that Daniel either did not worship or was not present at the ceremony.**

His test comes in Daniel 6 where he stands tall in the Lions den.

So far in our study of the book of Daniel, we have seen that God's blessings accompany our faithfulness.

We have also seen from the book of Revelation, once again, that one of God's Ten Commandments will be broken and forced worship will take place.

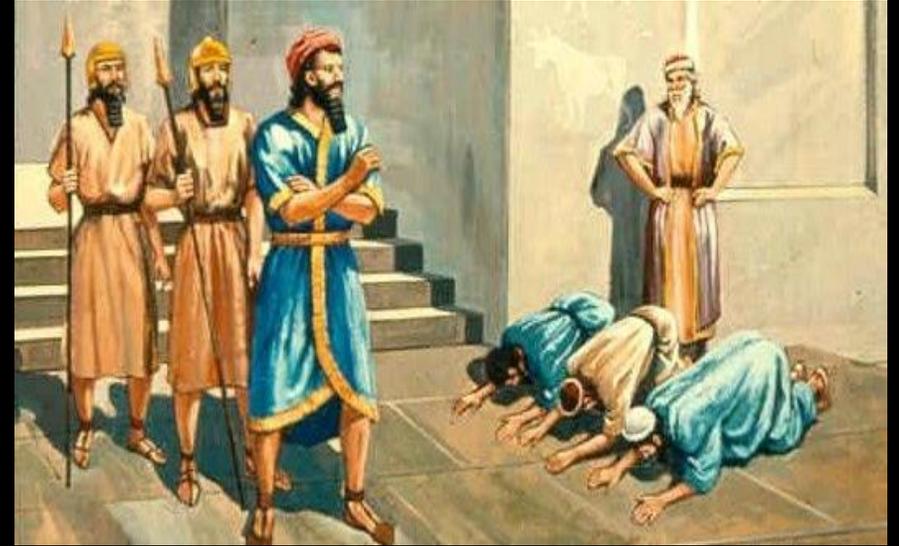
Are we ready to stand faithful to Jesus and His 10 Commandments, even to the point of death? **Jesus deserves our very best!**



Life Application

Like the three Hebrew exiles, Mordecai also refused to bow down before Haman ([Esther 3:1–5](#)). In both cases, the Lord brought deliverance to His servants. However, this does not happen always. Isaiah and John the Baptist sealed their faith with their own lives. In light of these outcomes, do you feel prepared to reap the unpleasant consequences of your rightful convictions? **Why, or why not?**

The previous experiences of the exiles both in the matter of the king's food ([Daniel 1](#)) and the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream ([Daniel 2](#)) somehow prepared the exiles to face the test of fire. What previous tests and experiences have you had that prepared you for bigger challenges later?



This study fosters some self-examination

What are some things that now, today, we are tempted to worship?

In what ways are we, even as Christians, slowly but surely getting caught up in worshiping something other than God?

Where do you draw the line between unswerving commitment to the Lord and fanaticism?

When it comes to your relationship with those who still do not know the Lord, is there a place for compromise?

If so, in what way and under what circumstances?

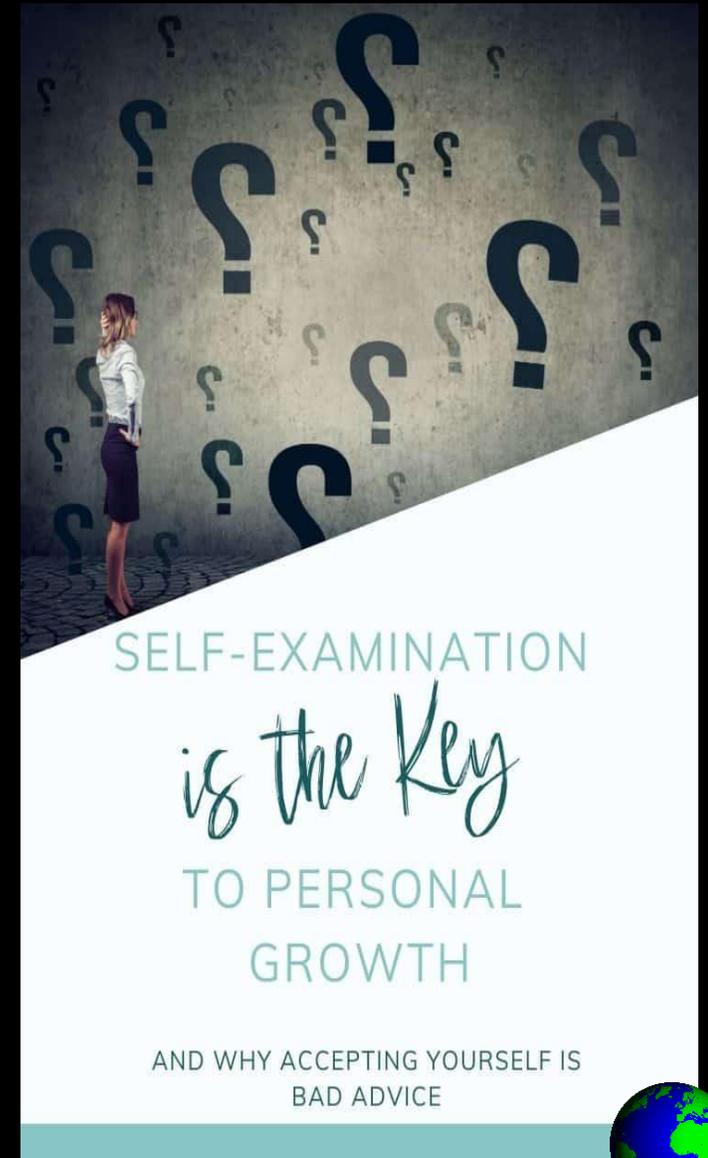
What things, if any, can we or should we compromise?

How can we tell if we are compromising or simply being prudent?

Would you jeopardize your life for refusing to do a very simple act?

If not, why couldn't you conform outwardly while inwardly feeling moral reservations?

Which is better, to die for truth, or to avoid crises and live to continue our witness?



2nd Beast of Revelation 13 - USA

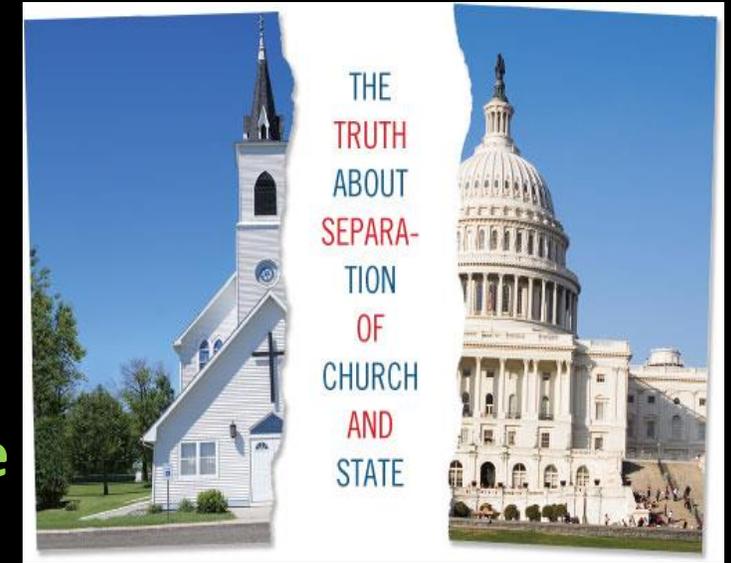
“In order for the United States to form an image of the beast, the religious power must so control the civil government that the authority of the state will also be employed by the church to accomplish her own ends.”

- *The Great Controversy*, p. 443

But in the very act of enforcing a religious duty by secular power, the churches would themselves form an image to the beast; hence the enforcement of Sunday keeping in the United States would be an enforcement of the worship of the beast and his image.” - *The Great Controversy*, p. 448

“The ‘image to the beast’ represents that form of apostate Protestantism which will be developed when the Protestant churches shall seek the aid of the civil power for the enforcement of their dogmas.” - *The Great Controversy*, p. 445

As the idea to build the image was not Nebuchadnezzar’s but rather that of the religious leaders, so the idea of building an image of and to the beast will be the idea of the religious leaders of the Protestant churches in the United States.



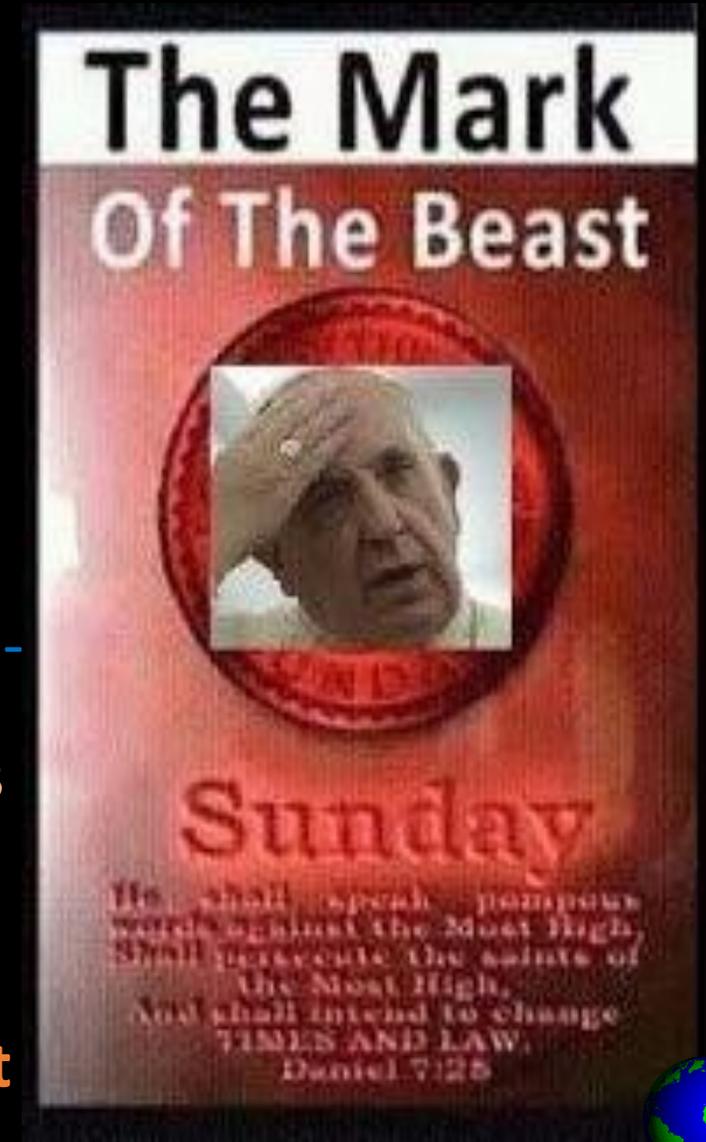
The Mark of the Beast will be Imposed by Force

Revelation 13:15 - *And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.*

The mark of the beast is the exact opposite of the seal of God. The seal of God is the Sabbath so the mark of the beast must be a another day of worship that seeks to counterfeit God's genuine day.

The first angel's message in Revelation 14:7 calls us to worship the creator in contrast to worshipping the beast and his image in the third angel's message (Revelation 14:9-11).

"An idol sabbath has been set up, as the golden image was set up in the plains of Dura. And as Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, issued a decree that all who would not bow down and worship this image should be killed, so a proclamation will be made that all who will not reverence the Sunday institution will be punished with imprisonment and death." - Manuscript Releases, Volume 14 p. 91



The number of the beast is 666 – Just as in the Babylonian

- The beast has a blasphemous name (Revelation 13:1).
- What is blasphemy? Blasphemy is when a mere man claims to be God on earth and also claims to have power to forgive sins (Mark 2:7; John 10:33).
- The blasphemous name has a number (Revelation 13:17).
- How do you get a number from a name?
- In ancient times numbers were written with letters.
- What language do we employ?
- It must be in Latin because this is a Roman power (Revelation 13:2).

Titles of the Roman Catholic Church that add up to 666

ITALIKA EKKLÉSIA (Latin: Italian church)
10 300 1 30 10 20 1 5 20 20 30 8 200 10 1

VICARIUS FILII DEI (Latin: vicar of God's Son)
5 1 100 0 0 1 5 0 0 1 50 1 1 500 0 1

DUX CLERI (Latin: head of clergy)
500 5 10 100 50 0 0 1

HÉLATINÉ BASILEIA (Greek: Latin Kingdom)
0 8 30 1 300 10 50 8 2 1 200 10 30 5 10 1

LATEINOS (Greek: Latin-speaking man)
30 1 300 5 10 50 70 200



The image and mark must have something to do with the Sun

Is it the same to worship the sun as it is to worship on Sunday? In principle it is the same because an idol is created by men's hands for worship while Sunday has been created by man for worship. Anything that man creates for worship in place of what God has created for worship is an idol.

The pope has an official name whose number value is 666: **Vicarius Filii Dei**. Notably, the word Antichrist means 'one who occupies the place of Christ'.

Ellen White draws the parallel:

“History will be repeated. False religion will be exalted. The first day of the week, a common working day, possessing no sanctity whatever, will be set up as was the image at Babylon. All nations and tongues and peoples will be commanded to worship this spurious sabbath. This is Satan's plan to make of no account the day instituted by God, and given to the world as a memorial of creation. - Bible Commentary, Volume 7 p. 976



VICARIUS FILII DEI

V = 5	F = 0	D = 500
I = 1	I = 1	E = 0
C = 100	L = 50	I = 1
A = 0	I = 1	<hr/>
R = 0	I = 1	501
I = 1	<hr/>	
U = 5	51	
S = 0		
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112		

666



Once again worship will be the central issue and it will be worldwide

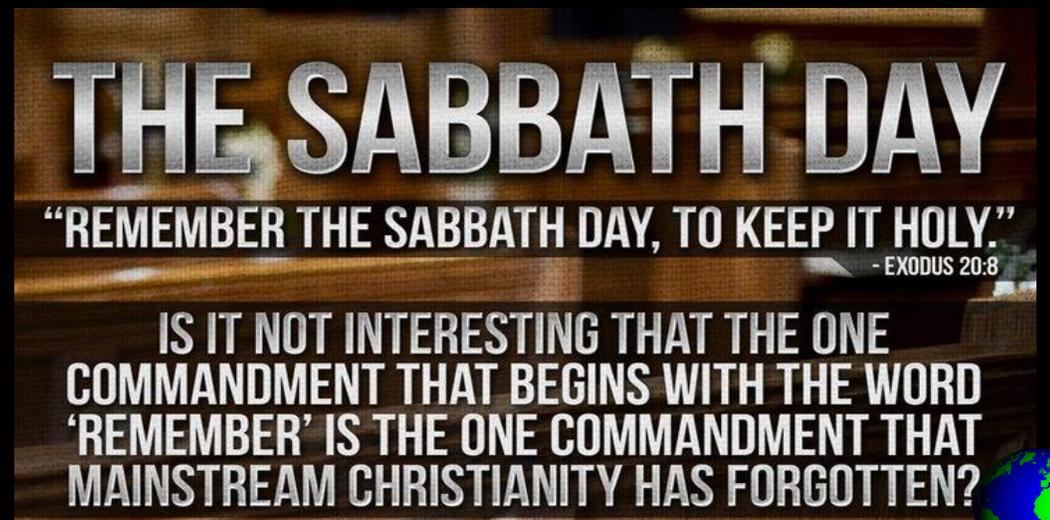
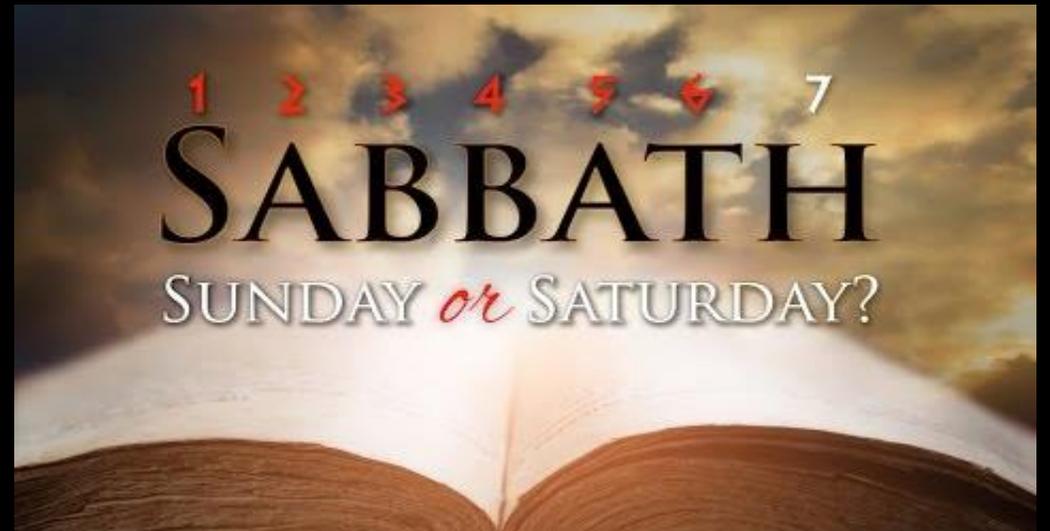
Please read Revelation 13:3, 8, 16; 14:6; 16:13, 14; 17:15

“The decree enforcing the worship of this day is to go forth to all the world”. - BC v7 p967

But the commandments will also be an issue, especially the first table of the law (Revelation 12:17; 14:12)

There will be a union of church and state (Revelation 17:1, 2; 18:3)

“When the leading churches of the United States, uniting upon such points of doctrine as are held by them in common, shall influence the state to enforce their decrees and to sustain their institutions, then Protestant America will have formed an image of the Roman hierarchy, and the infliction of civil penalties upon dissenters will inevitably result.” - The Great Controversy, p. 445



A death decree will be proclaimed against God's faithful remnant (Revelation 13:15)

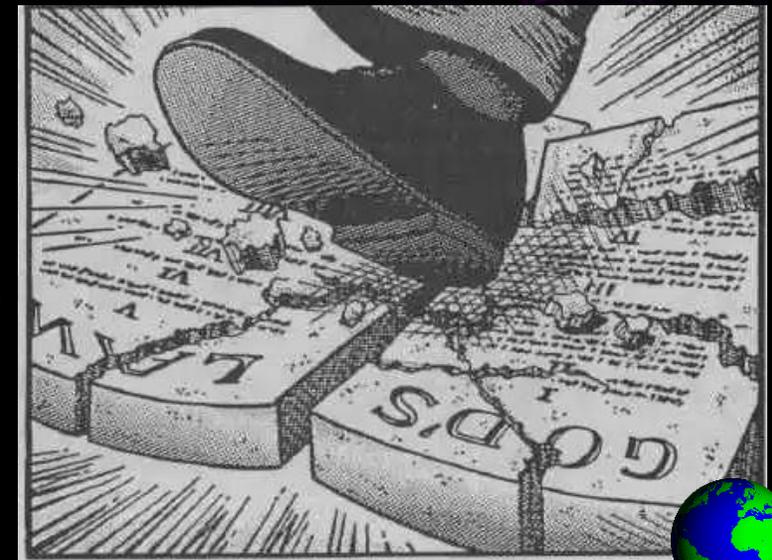
“As the Sabbath has become the special point of controversy throughout Christendom, and religious and secular authorities have combined to enforce the observance of the Sunday, the persistent refusal of a small minority to yield to the popular demand will make them objects of universal execration.” - GC, p. 615

As in all apostasies of history, music and external display will play a significant role in the end time (Revelation 18:22).

God will have a faithful remnant which will refuse to worship the image to the beast (Revelation 12:17; 14:12; 15:2-4).

Protestant religious leaders will be the foremost to accuse the remnant of God. Just like in the days of Elijah, John the Baptist, Jesus and the middle ages.

“As the controversy extends into new fields and the minds of the people are called to God's downtrodden law, Satan is astir. The power attending the message will only madden those who oppose it. The clergy will put forth almost superhuman efforts to shut away the light lest it should shine upon their flocks. By every means at their command they will endeavour to suppress the discussion of these vital questions.” GC, p. 607



Satan will manifest his wrath (Revelation 12:17)

There will be a similar question as was asked by Nebuchadnezzar (Revelation 13:3, 4).

There will be a severe time of trouble and God's people will appear doomed. Daniel 11:44 has the sequence: King of the north goes out to annihilate many then Michael stands up to defend his people, then they are delivered.

The fiery furnace is the seven last plagues where the totality of God's wrath is to be poured out. The wicked will be destroyed but not the righteous.

The wicked oppressors of God's people will perish with their own weapons.

Jesus will personally intervene to deliver His people – Daniel 12:1.

God will demand unswerving loyalty!

A fireproof character - Isaiah 33:14-16.

We must have a sterling character. Be faithful in the small things (Luke 16:10; Jeremiah 12:5).



Final Comforting Promise

In Revelation there is a power which is described as the beast and the beast is a symbol of the Roman Catholic Papacy (Revelation 13:2).

The beast will have an image built in its honor. The image is a replica of the Papacy that is raised up in its honor by Protestant America (Revelation 13:11-17).

As in the days of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, so in the closing period of earth's history the Lord will work mightily in behalf of those who stand steadfastly for the right. He who walked with the Hebrew worthies in the fiery furnace will be with His followers wherever they are. His abiding presence will comfort and sustain. In the midst of the time of trouble--trouble such as has not been since there was a nation--His chosen ones will stand unmoved. Satan with all the hosts of evil cannot destroy the weakest of God's saints. Angels that excel in strength will protect them, and in their behalf Jehovah will reveal Himself as a "God of gods," able to save to the uttermost those who have put their trust in Him. - Prophets and Kings, pp. 512, 513.

SUN-day

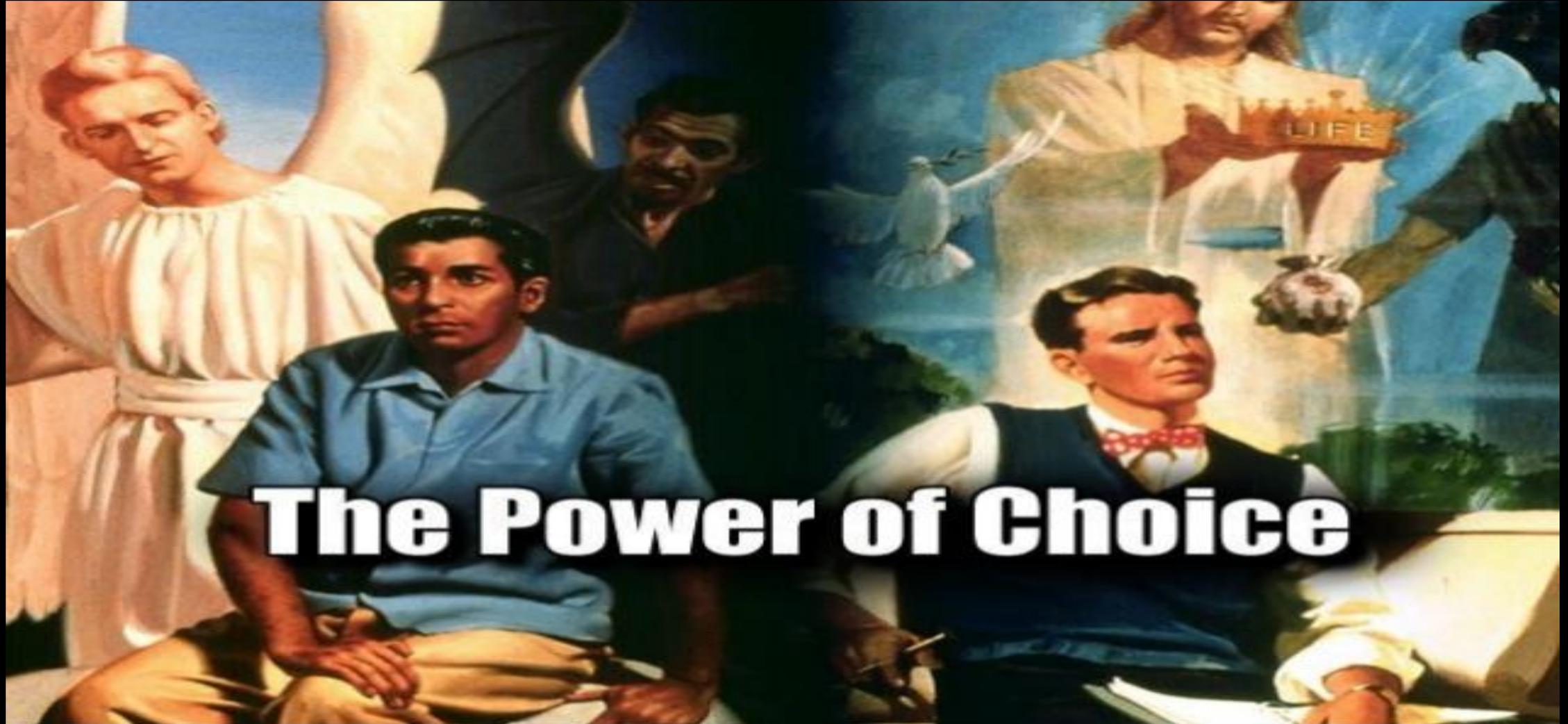
“The Mark of the Papacy’s Authority”

Sunday is our **MARK** of **authority**....
The (**Roman**) church is above the **Bible**, and this transference of **Sabbath** observance is **proof of that fact**.

— Catholic Record, September 1, 1923 (Ontario).

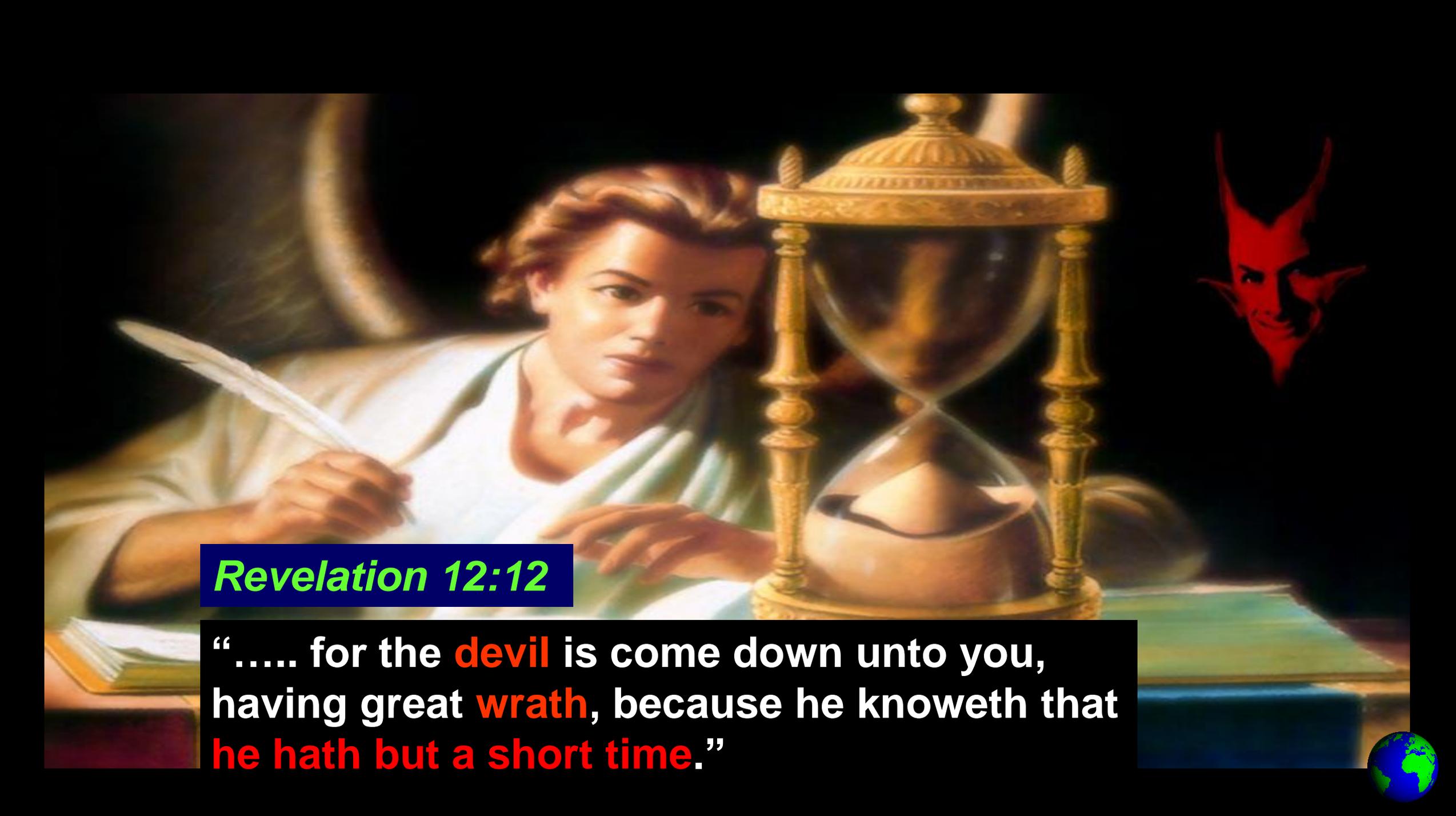


God has given all:



The Power of Choice





Revelation 12:12

“..... for the **devil** is come down unto you, having great **wrath**, because he knoweth that **he hath but a short time.**”



Enter The Ark of Hope

And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, *and* one shepherd.

– John 10:16



The Ark of the Covenant



Psalms 77:13

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. –
Revelation 3:20





THE END



ARE YOU READY TO MEET JESUS?