

Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold – Chapter 2 finished with the king giving glory to God and saying that Daniel’s God is “God of gods and Lord of kings.” However, that newfound humility proved to be short-lived. Instead of learning humility and submitting himself to the “God of gods,” the Babylonian king went the other way. Nebuchadnezzar built an entire statue dedicated to himself. Note that the figure was made out of gold. The image was 90 feet (27.4 meters) tall and 9 feet (2.7 meters) wide. The size of the hulking image was meant to impress and intimidate. It was almost as tall as the Colossus of Rhodes! Nebuchadnezzar’s “repentance” didn’t last long. Often people’s immediate response to an exciting spiritual experience is to become pious. But piety that is based on an emotional or dramatic event generally doesn’t last. When life gets back to normal, it is easy to fall right back into old habits.

Think back on your life and remember an event (perhaps a trial or a victory) that made you feel excited and close to God. But as time passed and things got back to normal, you slipped into old habits. What are some causes of that?

Read Daniel 3

1. Without looking at the Bible, retell the story from memory as best as you can. Perhaps one person has a go and others can add in at the end.
2. The story of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego is one of the more famous Bible stories. Did you hear the story as a child? How do you react now to the event, that is different on first hearing it?
3. Ancient societies like the Babylonians worshipped many gods and had varying moralities. To assume one God and one way of living was against their thinking. How is our society similar and yet very different to the Babylonians?

4. In the run-up to the fiery furnace, Nebuchadnezzar tries to make himself a god to the people of Babylon. He erects a golden image and orders everyone to worship it. Consider the response of the three friends to his order: 'we have no need to answer you in this matter... our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace... But if not..., we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image' What do you think of their response?
5. What Bible verses, stories or songs come to your mind when you are going through a testing time?
6. Nebuchadnezzar’s scoffed, 'Who is the god who will deliver you out of my hands?' Why do people mock what they don't know? Read Proverbs 21:24
7. Nebuchadnezzar discovered that there was a God in heaven who could save - he delivered the three out of the fiery furnace unharmed. What was Nebuchadnezzar’s reaction? How does his reaction relate to Mark 4:1-20?
8. What is God speaking to you from this story? Where do you feel challenged, reminded or encouraged?
9. Consider the apprehension the three must have faced as they saw the fiery furnace, yet they bravely faced it knowing that God could deliver them and, even if he didn't, they would not fail him. What about you? In what way has your faith cost you anything?
10. Look again at Nebuchadnezzar's praise of God in Daniel 3:28-30. If only more people today saw God in the same light. Would you say the three must have had a significant impact on their Babylonian peers? Does God still act in this way? Can you give an example?

Prayer Points

Pray for God's provision to ensure that the ministry of the Mozambican Association of Christian Lawyers (AMAC) will continue to make a difference. Give thanks for the staff and volunteers who dedicate their time and resources to bringing access to justice for marginalised people.

Make a list of the people and areas of life for which you want to give thanks.

Sermon Notes



BIBLE STUDY

September 29th 2024

Daniel - Defiant Faith:

Faith in the Fire : Daniel 3

The book of Daniel tells Daniel's story—and a fascinating and instructive story it is. But the main purpose of Daniel is to reveal to us who God is - His character, His purposes, His way of working in the world for the good of His people. The main lesson of Daniel, then, is not, as is sometimes assumed *Dare to be a Daniel!* Rather, the main point is this: *Dare to trust in Daniel's God, even when the world seems against you.* How do we remain faithful to God, especially in an age where it seems a great deal is moving in a different direction? What does it look like to trust in God when our world is turned upside down? Daniel remained faithful and God used him to great effect, how can God use us in the fiery challenges of life?

If you would like to join a Connect Group, please contact the church office 01424 730001