

The Delivered

Daniel 3:1-30

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“Many years ago, when communism still held the Soviet Union in its iron clench, a little group of Christians met behind closed doors in the underground. This was a secret meeting, a secret church service. Suddenly, the doors burst open, and 2 soldiers appeared with submachine guns. They shouted, “To all those who are willing to renounce Jesus Christ: You’ve got 5 minutes to leave! Everyone who remains will be shot immediately.”

As you can imagine, every Christian in that place began to search their heart, and ask themselves, am I willing to die for Jesus Christ right now, today?

A few got up and left, ashamedly, quietly, they left with heads hung low. Most of the people stayed. As the last one left, a soldier shouted, “Is that it?” He held up his gun and repeated, “Anyone else?” Another man rose and ran out.

The soldiers locked the doors, and turned toward the people... ..they laid down their guns...and said, “Brothers and Sisters, we too are Christians. We do not want to worship the Lord with anyone who is not willing to die for Him! Now that the half-hearted have gone, let’s have church!” What a service they had together that day!

“All men die, few men really live.” Braveheart

A Christian persecution watchdog has released statistics suggesting a Christian is martyred for their faith every five minutes.

- By the end of this service 18 of our brothers and sisters in Christ will have died for their faith!

Iraq

- In the land of Eden, Jonah and Daniel, Christians have shrunk from 1.5 million to 300,000.

- “We are being massacred and I don’t know how much further we can go,” a tearful Assyrian Christian activist told a packed audience at the National Press Club in Washington, DC.

- ISIS has systematically targeted religious minorities for murder and abduction and has auctioned off girls and women kidnapped from religious minority groups. It prices the youngest (ages one to nine) at 200,000 dinars/ USD \$170.
 - The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) warns that the ongoing violence could “well mark the end of ... its ancient Yazidi and Christian communities.”
- Christian Freedom International has found that more than 200 million followers are facing persecution in 105 countries. This makes Christianity the most persecuted religion in the world.

The Decree

Daniel 3:1-7 “¹ Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was sixty cubits (90 feet tall) *and* its width six cubits (9 feet). He set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. ² And King Nebuchadnezzar sent *word* to gather together the satraps, the administrators, the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. ³ So the satraps, the administrators, the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces gathered together for the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. ⁴ Then a herald cried aloud: “To you it is commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, ⁵ that at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, *and* psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, you shall fall down and worship the gold image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up; ⁶ and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.” ⁷ So at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the horn, flute, harp, *and* lyre, in symphony with all kinds of music, all the people, nations, and languages fell down *and* worshiped the gold image which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.”

- At the close of chapter 2 Nebby had said, “*Truly your God is the God of gods, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, since you could reveal this secret.*” Then he promotes Daniel and his three friends in the province of Babylon.”
 - How much time had elapsed between chapter 2 and 3? We don’t really know.
 - It’s obvious that Nebby’s statement of faith wasn’t a profession at all.
- Maybe he thought long and hard about the image of his dream and decided to set up his own image of gold to be worshipped.
 - After all, he was the head of gold.
 - *He did however forget one little thing:*
§ God established his kingdom!
- *The Herald*
 - ALL will bow, ALL will worship.

- A Worldly Worship Service.
 - Everyone bows, everyone pays homage.
 - § Do you want to fit in? Do you want to live? You must bow to the image the world sets up.
- You can't call a boy a boy, and you can't call a girl a girl.
- If you say only boys can use the boy's bathroom you're a bigot!

The Threat

Daniel 3:8-18 “⁸ Therefore at that time certain Chaldeans came forward and accused the Jews. ⁹ They spoke and said to King Nebuchadnezzar, “O king, live forever! ¹⁰ You, O king, have made a decree that everyone who hears the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, *and* psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, shall fall down and worship the gold image; ¹¹ and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. ¹² There are certain Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego; these men, O king, have not paid due regard to you. They do not serve your gods or worship the gold image which you have set up.” ¹³ Then Nebuchadnezzar, in rage and fury, gave the command to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. So they brought these men before the king. ¹⁴ Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying to them, “*Is it true*, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, *that* you do not serve my gods or worship the gold image which I have set up? ¹⁵ Now if you are ready at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, *and* psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, and you fall down and worship the image which I have made, *good!* But if you do not worship, you shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. And who *is* the god who will deliver you from my hands?” ¹⁶ Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego answered and said to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. ¹⁷ If that *is the case*, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver *us* from your hand, O king. ¹⁸ But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that *we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up.*”

- The children of God, Yahweh, are singled out.
- How big of Nebby to give them another chance.
 - He's ready to strike up the band, but doesn't know who he's dealing with.
 - Vs. 15 “*WHO* is the god who will deliver you from my hands?”
 - § Their faith was being mocked.
- I think, really, *Nebby is the one being given another chance.*
- Vs. 17, OUR GOD IS ABLE!
 - But if He chooses not to, we still won't bow.
 - § It's better to burn than bow was their conclusion.
 - **Proverbs 29:25** “The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD shall be safe”
 - **Luke 12:4-5** “*And I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those*

who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. ⁵ But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, fear Him!”

○ **Acts 5:28-29** “²⁸ Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this Man’s blood on us!” ²⁹ But Peter and the *other* apostles answered and said: “*We ought to obey God rather than men.*”

The Test

Daniel 3:19-23 “¹⁹ Then Nebuchadnezzar was full of fury, and the expression on his face changed toward Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. He spoke and commanded that they heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated. ²⁰ And he commanded certain mighty men of valor who were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, and cast them into the burning fiery furnace. ²¹ Then these men were bound in their coats, their trousers, their turbans, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. ²² Therefore, because the king’s command was urgent, and the furnace exceedingly hot, the flame of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. ²³ And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.”

• I’ve heard this quote often, “*A faith that isn’t tested, can’t be trusted.*”

○ **Psalms 66:10** “For You, O God, have tested us; You have refined us as silver is refined.”

○ **Hebrews 11:17-19** “¹⁷ By faith Abraham, when he was *tested*, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, ¹⁸ of whom it was said, “*In Isaac your seed shall be called,*” ¹⁹ concluding that God was able to raise *him* up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.

○ **1 Peter 1:6-9** “⁶ In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷ that the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is *tested by fire*, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, ⁸ whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see *Him*, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, ⁹ receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of *your* souls.”

• **John 18:18-21** “¹⁸ “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before *it hated* you. ¹⁹ If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. ²⁰ Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also.”

The Deliverance

Daniel 3:24-30 “²⁴ Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and he rose in haste and spoke, saying to his counselors, “Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?” They answered and said to the king, “True, O king.” 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*.” ²⁶ Then Nebuchadnezzar went near the mouth of the burning fiery furnace and spoke, saying, “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, servants of the *Most High God*, *come out*, and come here.” Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego came from the midst of the fire. ²⁷ And the satraps, administrators, governors, and the king’s counselors gathered together, and they saw these men on whose bodies the fire had no power; the hair of their head was not singed nor were their garments affected, and the smell of fire was not on them. ²⁸ Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying, “Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, who sent His Angel and delivered His servants who trusted in Him, and they have frustrated the king’s word, and yielded their bodies, that they should not serve nor worship any god except their own God! ²⁹ Therefore I make a decree that any people, nation, or language which speaks anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made an ash heap; because there is no other God who can deliver like this.” ³⁰ Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego in the province of Babylon.”

- *Most High God* – is found 13 times in the book of Daniel and out those 13, Nebby says it 7 times.
- Vs. 26 God didn’t keep them FROM the furnace, but delivered them OUT of it!
 - God won’t keep you FROM testing, but will be WITH you in it, and deliver you OUT of it.
- *Son of God/Angel* – Pre-incarnate Jesus
 - Where was Jesus when His people were tested?

§ Right there with them!!!

§ **Matthew 28:19-20** “¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even to the end of the age.*” Amen.”

• **Acts 7:9-10** “⁹ “And the patriarchs, becoming envious, sold Joseph into Egypt. But God was with him ¹⁰ and *delivered him out of all his troubles*, and gave him favor and wisdom in the presence of Pharaoh, king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house.”

• **Psalms 34:5-7, 15-22** “⁵ They looked to Him and were radiant, and their faces were not ashamed. ⁶ This poor man cried out, and the Lord heard *him*, and saved him out of all his troubles. ⁷ The angel of the Lord encamps all around those who fear Him, and delivers them... ¹⁵ The eyes of the Lord *are* on the

righteous, and His ears *are open* to their cry. ¹⁶ The face of the Lord *is* against those who do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. ¹⁷ *The righteous* cry out, and the Lord hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles. ¹⁸ The Lord *is* near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit. ¹⁹ Many *are* the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all. ²⁰ He guards all his bones; not one of them is broken. ²¹ Evil shall slay the wicked, and those who hate the righteous shall be condemned. ²² The Lord redeems the soul of His servants, and none of those who trust in Him shall be condemned.”

When the emperor Valens threatened Eusebuis with confiscation of all his goods, torture, banishment, or even death, the courageous Christian replied, "He needs not fear confiscation, who has nothing to lose; nor banishment, to whom heaven is his country; nor torments, when his body can be destroyed at one blow; nor death, which is the only way to set him at liberty from sin and sorrow."

Source Unknown.