

Daniel 3

2-24-00

“Fools Gold vs. Gold Tried in the Fire!”

1. **Intro:**

- 1.1. **Last week:** Neb’s dream was given & interpreted.
 - 1.1.1. **Q:** What was it? { **Gold** Babylon Empire; **Silver**/Medo-Persian Empire; **Bronze**/Grecian Empire; **Iron** Roman Empire; **Iron & Clay**/The revived Roman Empire.}
 - 1.1.2. Note the **value** of the metal decreases a history unfolds, ending up in a weak mixture of iron & clay.
- 1.2. **This week:** we have an action packed thriller.
 - 1.2.1. Like seeing a **movie** that really inspires you, you come out ready to conquer the world (old Rocky movies)
 - 1.2.2. This story of the “3 children in the fire” is: inspiring, motivating, & compelling. We see their determination, rigidity, inflexibility, their resolution & decisiveness to be able to say, “Here I stand!”...no matter what! - We see their **steadfastness** in upholding truth.
 - 1.2.2.1. **1 Cor.15:58** “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be **steadfast, immovable, always abounding** in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”

2. **FAIRWAY TO THE FIRE! (1-7)**

- 2.1. **(1-3) The Dedication of the Image!**
 - 2.1.1. Not content to be the “**head**” of **Gold**...he wanted the whole body!
 - 2.1.1.1. **Q:** Who else sought, or will seek, to be worshipped? (Lucifer, Anti-Christ)
 - 2.1.2. **The Image** – 90’x9’
 - 2.1.2.1. Another proof this wasn’t a latter account. Some say this was written(cuz of the prophecies) after Rome took over Greece.
 - 2.1.2.2. **Babylonian system** of mathematics was built upon 6’s.
 - 2.1.2.3. The **Greeks system** of mathematics was built upon 10’s(like ours).
- 2.2. **(4-7) The Command to Worship it!**
 - 2.2.1. When you here the quintet play...you better obey!

3. **FACING THE FIRE! (8-18)**

- 3.1. **(8-12) They’re seeking “Promotion by Combustion!”**
 - 3.1.1. They did not like these foreigners being promoted over them(2:49).
 - 3.1.2. “They are challenging your authority Mr. King Sir!” – “What are you going to do about it?”
 - 3.1.3. **Classic Civil Disobedience!** – Must obey god rather than man!

- 3.2. (13-15) The Pinnacle of Pride!
- 3.2.1. One more chance boys.
- 3.2.1.1. It seems **temptation** is so generous when it comes to “one more chance”...to defect!
- 3.2.2. **Q: Are you into this Christianity thing as long as all is ok?**
- 3.2.3. Jesus said, “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.” (Jn.15:19)
- 3.3. (16-18) Daring to Be Different!
- 3.3.1. Picture 1000’s dropping to their faces to the ground, as far as eye could see. And there stood 3!
- 3.3.1.1. The 3 Champions, The 3 Holy Children, The Trusting Trio!
- 3.3.2. What a Pledge of Allegiance!
- 3.4. Like a sail on a sailboat, “their hearts were set in the right direction”
- 3.4.1. **Ps.78:8** “And may not be like their fathers, A stubborn and rebellious generation, A generation that did not set its heart aright, And whose spirit was not faithful to God.”
- 3.5. They were probably trusting in **Is.43:2**, “When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. **When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, Nor shall the flame scorch you.**”
- 3.6. **Q: Does God always Rescue you out of trouble?**
- 3.6.1. **Q: Has He ever “not” rescued you out of a situation before?**
- 3.6.2. Our part is to trust His character & His Sov. plan, whatever it is... “Martyrdom”, or “Freedom from the fire.”
- 3.7. What to do in the face of Crisis?
- 3.7.1. **[1] Remember Action speak louder than words (16b)**
- 3.7.2. **[2] Remember Confidence in the Lord (17)**
- 3.7.2.1. Not confidence in their **faith**, Not confidence in their **holiness**, Not confidence in their **positions held**, Not confidence in their **works**. But confidence in their **God!!!**
- 3.7.3. **[3] Remember to hold fast to Unchanging Convictions! (18)**
- 3.7.3.1. Convictions not based upon the **outcome**,nor on **threats** verbalized against them!
- 3.7.3.2. A conviction like Martin Luther held fast to... “**Here I stand!**”
- 3.8. They could pass through the flames because they knew **God** was on the other side.

4. **FELLOWSHIP IN THE FIRE! (19-25)**

- 4.1. (19) Q: Who's hotter...Neb or the furnace?
 - 4.1.1. Full of fury, face contorting.
 - 4.1.2. He just wanted them to "vaporize"!
- 4.2. (20) Furnace – ↳ (atoun) 6 main words for furnace in Hebrew.
Usually made of brick or stone. Probably a large furnace used for smelting metals or for firing bricks.
 - 4.2.1. Both history & archeology reveal cruelty of some punishments under ancient oriental despots(des-pits).¹
 - 4.2.2. Usually had an opening at the top. They would climb ladders & throw them in.
- 4.3. (22) As kids we used to say, "*what a burn!*" But that probably wouldn't be appropriate here.
- 4.4. (23) They were bound, They fell, They were helpless!
 - 4.4.1. Then in vs.25 instead of **bound** they were **freed**, instead of **falling** they were **walking**, & instead of **feeling helpless** they had a **helper!**
- 4.5. (24,25) Fire brings Blessings! (at least 2 of them here)
 - 4.5.1. [1] Fellowship - The Lord came to walk with them.
 - 4.5.2. [2] Freedom - The Lord set them free from their bonds.
 - 4.5.2.1. Oh what freedoms we experience when we are set free from the things that bind us.
 - 4.5.3. "If you're Faithful to Follow the Father, both Fellowship & Freedom will be Found in your Fire!"
 - 4.5.4. I believe when you are in the fire you have the opportunity to be the **nearest & dearest** to Christ.
 - 4.5.4.1. **Ps.34:18** "The LORD is **near** to those who have a broken heart, And saves such as have a contrite spirit(those crushed in spirit)."

¹ Zondervan Pict. Encyc.

4.5.4.2. **Job 23:10** "...When He has **tested** me, I shall come forth as **gold**."

4.5.4.3. **Prov.17:3** "The refining pot is for **silver** and the furnace for **gold**, But the LORD tests the **hearts**."

4.5.4.4. **Mal.3:1-3** – Good!

4.5.4.5. **1 Pet.1:6,7** "In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, 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,"

4.5.4.6. We sing, "w/Christ on my **vessel** I can smile at the **storm**." And now we can add a stanza, "With Christ in my **furnace** I can smile at the **flames**!"

4.6. The flames themselves weren't quenched but the **power** of the flames were!

4.6.1. **Heb.11:34** " quenched the **power** of fire," (NASB)

4.7. Let's hear from Spurgeon from his "Morning & Evening" Devotional (Dec. 17 Morn) ...In the **fiery furnace of Babylon**, the Son of Man visited his people. Because his soul delighted in them, he could not rest away from them, for his heart longed after them. Never were they absent from his heart, for he had written their names upon his hands, and graven them upon his side. As the breastplate containing the names of the tribes of Israel was the most brilliant ornament worn by the high priest, so the names of Christ's elect were his most precious jewels, and glittered on his heart. We may often forget to meditate upon the perfections of our Lord, but he never ceases to remember us. Let us chide ourselves for past forgetfulness, and pray for grace ever to bear him in fondest remembrance. Lord, paint upon the eyeballs of my soul the image of thy Son.

4.8. **Be assured:** When the bottom drops out, God drops in!

4.9. **Q:** What flames are you facing?

4.10. **Q:** What's it like feeling the heat in your face? - Do you feel bound? - Does it feel 7 x's hotter?

5. **FOLLOWING THE FIRE! (26-30)**

5.1. (27) I can't even BBQ without smelling like steak?

5.2. (29) Ironic – "The mighty king who ordered the world to bow before his image now bows before the king of the world!" (Swindoll)

5.3. **End:**

5.3.1. "Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life." **Rev.2:10**

5.3.2. **Psalms 91** – Read!

5.4. Fool's Gold vs. Gold Tried in the Fire!