

1. **“You must fall down and worship the image”**

2. **“Even if He does not”**

3. **“No other god can save in this way”**

The Book of Daniel

chapter 3

God's glory: The suffering of faithful servants



Introduction

Daniel, his friends, and many of the Jewish leaders were captives in Babylon. It was the worst period of Jewish history because God was punishing Judah for her sins. In Daniel chapter 2 God revealed his sovereign rule over earthly kingdoms and his rule over history by giving Daniel the secrets to King Nebuchadnezzar's dream. The Jewish exile was not a sign of God's weakness but rather a sign of God's power and rule. Daniel became God's messenger and he was given the gift of interpreting dreams to make this truth known.

Opening discussion

What was the costliest decision you ever had to make? What did it involve and what did it cost you?

Read the passage: *Daniel 3*.

1. What did King Nebuchadnezzar build? Why did he build it?

2. How tall was this thing that he built? How high is ninety feet?
 - a. 2 story building (small apartment)
 - b. 8 story building (small office block)
 - c. 10 story building (medium office block)
 - d. 15 story building (small hotel)

3. Background: Read Exodus 20:1–6. What is God’s attitude towards idols?

4. Many people don’t think idols are bad because it doesn’t seem to harm anyone. What’s wrong with idolatry even if it doesn’t seem dangerous?

5. From the story how did Daniel’s friends get in trouble with the King?

6. Reading v16–18 in Daniel 3, why did Daniel’s friends oppose the King and his threats to kill them? Which answer is true? Give your reasons.
 - a. They wanted to be martyrs and example for others to follow.
 - b. They were confident that God would save them.
 - c. They were against idolatry.
 - d. They wouldn’t let the King scare them or bully them.
 - e. They were proud and stubborn young men.
 - f. They didn’t know what else to do.
 - g. They feared God more than they feared the King.

- 7a. What happened to Daniel’s friends in the furnace?

- 7b. How did the King respond?

8. How was God glorified in v28–29?

Meaning and Relevance

9. Which of the following do you think is true and which of the following are false?
 - a. The story shows us that God will always rescue those who trust in Him.
 - b. The story shows the importance of not bowing down to idols.
 - c. The story shows that God has not abandoned his people who are in exile.
 - d. The story shows that we can overcome difficulties only if we trust and obey God.
 - e. The story shows that those who choose to live for God will suffer greatly.
 - f. The story shows that obeying God is far more important than compromising our faith.
 - g. The story shows that living a godly life shouldn’t depend on whether God will rescue us from danger.

Summary

Daniel’s friends knew that God could rescue them but their faithfulness to God did not depend on His rescue. They were willing to die for God irrespective of whether God would rescue them (3:18). In the NT, Jesus’ death and resurrection gives those who put their trust in Jesus assurance of eternal life. Opposition will always happen to Christians because the world is against Jesus. But Christians have hope and courage to face opposition because of His death and resurrection.

10. What circumstances (if any) do you think will require you to suffer for Jesus?

11. How does Jesus Christ’s suffering affect our attitudes towards our own suffering? Read 1 Peter 4:12–19.

12. What costs did you have to pay in order to follow Jesus?