

"Taking a Stand"  
Daniel 3

1. The Pressures to Conform

- a. National Pride 2.31-38 Isaiah 40.17
- b. Vague Religion v. 1 2 John 7,9
- c. Media Blitz v. 5 Philip 3.18,19 2 Tim 1.15

2. The Challenges to Compromise

- a. Authority Figures v. 4 2 Timothy 4.3,4
- b. Mass Appeal v. 7 1 Peter 4.3-5

3. God our Confidence

- a. Our Judge v. 16 Matt 10.22,28 1 Cor 4.3-5
- b. Our Protector vs. 17,26,27 Genesis 18.14
- c. Our Wisdom vs.18,30 Gal 2.20 Philip 1.20,21

4. The Reward of Our Convictions

- a. Fellowship with God v. 25 Isaiah 43.1-7
- b. Impact on the World vs. 28,29 Acts 5.12-14

"THE CHRISTIAN CITIZEN" - OUR RELATION TO THE GOVERNMENT  
NEBUCHADNEZZAR - GREAT POLITICAL LEADER - PERHAPS GREATEST EVER  
BABYLON - HIS EMPIRE - POSSIBLY GREATEST IN HISTORY

HIS DREAM AND ITS INTERPRETATION - Chapter 2

vs. 31-33 "YOU LOOKED.....BAKED CLAY

vs. 36-38 "THIS WAS THE DREAM.....HEAD OF GOLD"

1. The Pressure to Conform

a. National Pride DREAM - BOLD NEW POSSIBILITIES - GREATNESS

2.34,35 "WHILE YOU WERE.....THE WHOLE EARTH

2.44,45 "IN THE TIME.....GOLD TO PIECES"

PERVERTS THE MESSAGE OF GOD - HEARS WHAT HE WANTS TO HEAR

HE AND HIS KINGDOM ARE EXALTED - GREATER THAN GOD

MORE THAN JUST HEAD OF GOLD - NO CLAY FEET - SECURITY

DANGER - AMERICA WILL SAVE THE WORLD - Politicians & Christians

Isaiah 40.17 "Before him all nations are as nothing; they are  
regarded by him as worthless and less than nothing."

Zech 4.6 "Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit" says the  
Lord Almighty

(2)

1715 - King Louis 14 of France DIED - CALLED SELF "the Great"  
"I AM THE STATE" - Court MOST MAGNIFICENT IN EUROPE  
SPECTACULAR FUNERAL - BODY LAY IN GOLD COFFIN - GREAT CATHEDRAL  
ONLY ONE CANDLE LIGHTED ABOVE COFFIN - DRAMATIC EFFECT  
Bishop's Message at FUNERAL - BLEW OUT CANDLE - "ONLY GOD IS GREAT"

b. Vague Religion

"RELIGION" lit. def. "to bind together" / NATIONAL UNITY  
INDIVIDUAL feels belonging to something - worthwhile / PURPOSE

v. 1 INTENTIONALLY AMBIGUOUS - Nebuchadnezzar? a god? many gods?

SYNCRETISTIC FOCAL POINT FOR ALL RELIGIONS OF BABYLON

"IMAGE of GOLD" - not specific- WHO/WHAT EVER YOU WANT IT TO MEAN

// "God bless America" - Christian, Jew, Muslim, Buddhist, etc.  
PRAYER IN SCHOOL?? TO WHO - moment of silence

Uganda - "80% CHRISTIAN" - 1971 Amin - MUSLIM  
UGANDA JOINS "League of Islamic States" - (6% Muslim not 60%!!)  
AMIN BEGINS TO BUILD GIANT MINARET - Prayer Tower in Kampala  
Call people to prayer 5 times a day - for 10 Miles  
CHRISTIANS COULD PRAY AT THE SAME TIME

VAGUE RELGION - YET CONFORMITY IS DEMANDED

2 John 7,9 "Many deceivers, who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh, have gone into the world. Any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist...Anyone who runs ahead and does not continue in the teaching of Christ does not have God; whoever continues in the teaching has both the Father and the Son"

WHICH GOD? only the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ

c. Media Blitz FESTIVAL OF THE NEW BABYLON

STRANGE - TALL, SKINNY STATUE - 9 feet by 90 feet - NEW FEAT  
MUSICAL FESTIVAL - TRAINED COMPOSERS AND ORCHESTRAS - CELEBRATION

v. 5 "the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes  
and all kinds of music"

Philippians 3.18 "many live as enemies of the cross of Christ"

LONLINESS OF OBEDIENCE TO CHRIST

2 Timothy 1.15 "everyone in the province of Asia has deserted me"

2. The Challenge to Compromise

a. Authority Figures WHO CONTRADICT THE TRUTH OF GOD

v. 4 "THIS IS WHAT YOU ARE COMMANDED TO DO"

v. 6 "whoever does not fall down and worship will immediately be  
thrown into a blazing furnace"

KNEW A SOCIETY COULD NOT BE HELD TOGETHER BY TERROR

WARNING FOR LUNATIC FRINGE WHO DARED DEFY HIS ORDERS

2 Timothy 4.3,4 "For the time will come when men will not put up  
with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they  
will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what  
their itching ears want to hear."

EXPERT AUTHORITIES WHO DEFY GOD -

Psychologists / Counselors - ENCOURAGE DIVORCE

Denominations - SUPPORT HOMOSEXUALITY and ABORTION

Pastors - JESUS IS NOT THE ONLY WAY OF SALVATION

"you can go to your college, you can go to your school,  
BUT IF YOU DON'T HAVE JESUS YOU ARE AN EDUCATED FOOL"

b. Mass Appeal EVERYBODY IS DOING IT

v. 7 "all the peoples, nations and men of every language fell  
down and worshipped the image of gold"

"ALL THE PEOPLES"

WE KNOW JEWS HAVE ONE GOD - YAHWEH - BUT RESPECT YOUR HOSTS

1 Peter 4.3-5 "For you have spent enough time in the past doing  
what pagans choose to do...They think it strange that you do not  
plunge with them into the same flood of dissipation, and they  
heap abuse on you."

VERY LONELY FEELING - STRANGE CUSTOMS - OTHER JEWS DID BOWED DOWN

### 3. God our Confidence

QUIET OBEDIENCE - NOT OPEN DEFIANCE

FOUND OUT - BY ASTROLOGERS

v. 8 "some of the astrologers came forward and denounced the Jews

v. 12 they pay no attention to you"

OPEN MINDED TO EVERYTHING EXCEPT EXCLUSIVE LOYALTY TO TRUE GOD

FROM TOLERANCE TO v. 13 "furious with rage"

NO POSSIBILITY OF COMPROMISE



GOD IS

a. Our Judge ULTIMATE, ETERNAL ACCOUNTABILITY

v. 16 "we do not need to defend ourselves before you"

NO NEED TO DEFEND OURSELVES - GOD IS MORE THAN TALK

1 Thess 1.5 "our gospel came not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction"

MESSAGE OF SILENT BRAVERY - NEB. KNEW THE HISTORY OF ISRAEL  
GOD OF ISRAEL - THE REDEEMER OF HIS PEOPLE

JESUS - 3 yrs. TEACHING AND PREACHING - CLIMAX - silence on cross

Matthew 10.22 "All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved"

10.28 "Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the one who can destroy both body and soul in hell"

Paul DID NOT FEAR JUDGMENT OF MEN - IGNORED CRITICS - FEAR OF GOD

1 Corinthians 4.3-5 "I care very little whether I am judged by you or any other human court...It is the Lord who judges me"

GOD IS

b. Our Protector DEFIED THE MIGHT OF BABYLON

v. 17 "the God we serve is able to protect us"

2.44 "the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed...it will crush all those kingdoms...but it will itself endure forever."

ANGEL OF GOD ASKED SARA

Genesis 18.14 "Is anything too hard for the Lord?"

JESUS SAID

Mark 9.23 "Everything is possible for him who believes"

Isaiah 59.1 "surely the arm of the Lord is not too short to save"

Daniel 3.27 "the fire had not harmed their bodies, nor was a hair of their heads singed; their robes were not scorched, and their was no smell of fire on them"

c. Our Wisdom SAVED AROUND FIRE OR THROUGH FIRE

v 18 "even if he does not (rescue us) we will not serve your gods

Luke 22.42 "Father if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done."

George Whitefield "Lord let me walk blindfolded in your care"

Galatians 2.20 "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body I live by faith in the Son of God who loves me and gave himself for me."

James Gray - former Pres. Moody Bible Institute - SEVERE ILLNESS  
DOCTOR RECOMMENDED OCEAN CRUISE FOR CONVALESCENCE  
ARRANGEMENTS MADE - PHYSICAL RELAPSE - UNABLE TO TRAVEL  
DEPRESSION - QUESTIONED GOD'S CONCERN  
Week later - Ship sank - NO SURVIVORS  
TEMPORARY SICKNESS / HIS SURVIVAL

Philippians 1.20,21 "I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain."

v. 30 PROMOTED BY GOD - PROMOTION FOLLOWS OBEDIENCE

Matthew 6.33 "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things will be added to you"

(7)

#### 4. The Reward of Convictions

##### a. Fellowship with God INWARD BLESSING

v. 25 "four men in the fire...and the fourth looks like a son of the gods"

PERHAPS A PRE-INCARNATE APPEARANCE OF JESUS - BEARING AFFLICTIONS

Isaiah 43.1-7 "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are mine...when you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior."

DAYS OF SAILING SHIPS - TERRIBLE STORM - ONE CREWMAN SURVIVED

FOUND SELF - WASHED ASHORE ON DESERTED ISLAND

GREAT STRUGGLE - BUILT SMALL SHELTER - FEW BELONGINGS

OUT LOOKING FOR FOOD - SAW SMOKE - SHELTER DESTROYED

SPENT SLEEPLESS NIGHT - CONSIDERING SUICIDE

NEXT MORNING - WENT TO SHORE - ROWBOAT COMING TO RESCUE

ONCE ON SHIP - ASKED "HOW DID YOU KNOW I WAS ON ISLAND?"

SAW SMOKE FROM YOUR SIGNAL FIRE

God can bring blessing out of what seems to be a Curse

AS WE GO IN OBEDIENCE

Matthew 28.20 "I am with you always"

##### b. Impact on the World OUTWARD IMPACT

vs. 28,29 READ ALL

THEIR SURVIVAL MEANT NEB'S SALVATION

v. 13 - Anger / v. 24 - Amazement / v. 29 - Acknowledgement

"for no other god can save in this way"

TIME OF OPPOSITION TO THE CHURCH - CALL TO COMMITMENT

Acts 5.11-14 "Great fear seized all those who heard about these events. The apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders among the people. And all the believers used to meet together...they were highly regarded by the people...more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number"