

Daniel Chapter 3

The literary structure of Daniel 3 as follows:

- A. King causes to **stand false image** (v. 1)
- B. King's first decree (vv. 2–7)
- C. Testimony of the three: false worship rejected; true worship proclaimed (vv. 8–18)
- D. The king enraged (v. 19)
- E. The three cast into the fire with garments (vv. 20–21)
- F. The fire has power over the executioners (v. 22–23)
- G. Deliverance into the fire (v. 23)
- H. The king amazed (v. 24–25)**
- G' The three called forth from the fire (v. 26)
- F' The fire has no power over the three (v. 27a)
- E' Their garments unharmed (v. 27b)
- D' King's repentance: True God honored (v. 28a)
- C' Testimony of the three accepted (v. 28b)
- B' King's second decree (v. 29)
- A' King exalts true **images** of God, and threatens to **cut down** any one who speaks against them. (v. 30)

The Image of Gold (3:1-7)

“...two important ancient Greek versions of the Old Testament begin this chapter with the date “in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar” ...”¹ “The LXX adds the words, “when he had brought under his rule cities and provinces and all that dwell upon the earth from India to Ethiopia.” This ... is obviously intended to furnish a reason for the erection of the image.”² If accurate, this would put these events in chapter three, 16 years after chapter 2 (see 2:1), which was about 603 B.C..

At this point in Daniel, the current year would be about 586-587 B.C.. If 586 B.C., this would be the year of the fall of Jerusalem to Babylon. And the creation of this statue could have been upon Nebuchadnezzar's return from that battle. He is at this point, feeling very sure of himself and the power of his gods.

The fact that Nebuchadnezzar had, in such a short period, destroyed the Assyrian Empire, subdued Egypt and destroyed the various nations of Palestine, suggests that it is now time to assure the loyalty of these new members of the Babylonian Empire. The events of chapter 3 are that loyalty ceremony.

“The fairly recent date of the establishment of the Babylonian Empire as the successor to Assyria ... made it appropriate for Nebuchadnezzar to assemble all the local and provincial leaders from every part of his domain and, in essence, exact from them a solemn oath of loyalty, certified with a religious sanction by this ceremony of adoration

¹ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 71.

LXX The Septuagint a pre-Christian translation of the OT into Greek. The portion on Dan. did not find favor in the Christian churches and was supplanted by the version of Theodotion. It is now extant in only one manuscript, the Codex Chisianus.

² Edward J. Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1980), 83.

of Babylon's god. But if any officials refused to comply, they were to be immediately executed in the superheated furnace erected nearby."³

On this bases or 16 years after chapter 2, the three children of Israel would be about 34 or 35 years old. They would have been serving in administrative roles in the empire all this time.

3:1 *Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was sixty cubits and its width six cubits. He set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.*

an image of gold.... "According to Jewish tradition, all the gold taken from Jerusalem was needed to consolidate the statue."⁴ If this were true, this would confirm that this event occurred after the fall of Jerusalem.

whose height was sixty cubits and its width six cubits. Statues in the cultures of the Near East were common in this era.

Sixty cubits, 90 feet, was on the large size though, although the Rhodes Colossus of seventy cubits was even higher. It appears to be a statue of one of the gods of Babylon. The width was rather small compared to the height and would look more like a stele or obelisk than a statue of a person. It is possible that there was a very large pedestal that formed its base with a statue situated on the pedestal



³ Gleason L. Archer Jr., "Daniel," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Daniel and the Minor Prophets*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 7 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986), 51.

⁴ John Joseph Collins and Adela Yarbro Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, ed. Frank Moore Cross, Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), 181.



“...the proportions of the image or statue suggest that it was probably a sort of symbolic column rather than an exact representation of a human or divine figure...”⁵

He set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. We are not entirely sure where this was other than it was probably close to the city of Babylon.

3:2 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.

the satraps, the administrators, the governors.... “...it seems that these three are given in descending order of importance. The satraps were in charge of the main

⁵ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 71.

divisions of the empire; the prefects were high officials responsible directly to the satraps, and the governors were heads of the subdivisions within the main divisions.”⁶

the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates.... “In the second group of officials, translators may consider the local equivalents for “elders,” “keepers of the treasury (or money),” “judges,” “suB.C.hiefs,” and “police officers.”⁷

3:3 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.

The first thing we notice is the number of important officers of the kingdom that were required to be at this event. The fact that this list is repeated several times in this story adds weight to the importance of this event, at least in the eyes of Nebuchadnezzar. “Obeying the king’s command to attend such an event and to do obeisance to the image also made it an occasion for officials to reaffirm their loyalty to the king.”⁸

3:4 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.”

O peoples, nations, and languages.... “In this case, the exaggerated language serves to show that the king wanted the worship of his statue to be universal.”⁹

3:5 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 René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 73.

⁷ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 73.

⁸ John H Walton, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Old Testament): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 536.

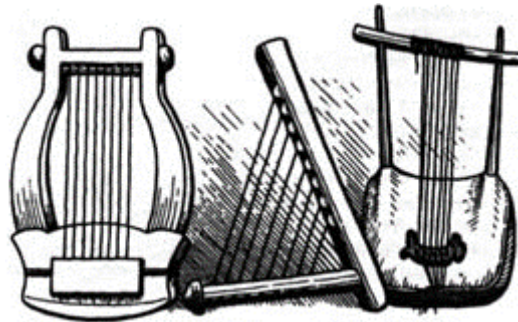
⁹ René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 74.

TRUMPETS AND RAMS' HORNS

The event is accompanied by a great band as a part of the worship, which signals the crowd the appropriate time to prostrate themselves before this idol.



A PIPE, OR FLUTE



HARP, TRIGON, AND LYRE

you shall fall down and worship the gold image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up....

“It was this orchestra that was to give the signal for all the assembled throng to bow down and worship the golden statue as a solemn declaration of their commitment to the Babylonian government and their willingness to incur divine wrath if they should ever break their oath of fealty.”¹⁰

This was an event that was designed to demonstrate the superiority of the gods Nebuchadnezzar and of Babylon over all the gods of the defeated nations.

3:6 and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.”

This story has much of the look and feel of an ancient covenant ceremony required of a suzerain (Nebuchadnezzar) of his vassals (the officers of his kingdom).

The stipulations of the covenant are that they worship Nebuchadnezzar’s gods. If they do so, they will continue to serve in their high and elevated positions. But if they fail to do so, then there are....

¹⁰ Gleason L. Archer Jr., “Daniel,” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Daniel and the Minor Prophets*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelain, vol. 7 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986), 52.

The sanctions of the covenant, which are the punishments for refusal, whereby they will be thrown into the furnace. The sanctions are not an afterthought, the furnace is near, and it is burning.

“No clear details are given about the furnace. Verses 22–23 may indicate that it had an opening at the top through which the victims were thrown into the fire, and there seems to have been a door or opening in the side through which Nebuchadnezzar could see into it (3:24).”¹¹ This was probably the furnace used to create much of the statue.

3:7 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.

And true to Nebuchadnezzar’s plan, at the sound of the music, everyone fell down and worshiped the golden image. Well, almost everyone.

Daniel’s Friends Disobey the King (3:8-12)

There may have been a delay between verse 7 and verse 8. It is not unlikely that after the prior worship service, that this was followed by “dinner on the grounds.” I envision dozens of tents with stately spreads of exceptional food for the guest. But there had been a growing rumor during the last hours that followed the worship service that some did not bow down. Eventually, the word reached prominent locals, “certain Chaldeans.” They listened with interest. Verse 8 follows.

***3:8 Therefore at that time certain Chaldeans came forward and accused the Jews.
3:9 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;***

It is clear that there was a great multitude present at this event. So many in fact that the three children of Israel were probably not noticed by Nebuchadnezzar when they first refused to worship the golden image. As a result, “**certain Chaldeans**” who did notice this refusal took advantage of it as an opportunity to get rid of those in their midst that they hated.

The possible year of this idol worship was after the fall of Jerusalem, 587 B.C., and could be related to the charge by certain Chaldeans of **the Jews**. The prolonged siege Jerusalem may have generated some question of loyalty of **Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego—Jews**.

This idol may be a celebration of Nebuchadnezzar’s victory in his various wars, one of which was victory over—**Jews**.

3:11 and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

¹¹ John H Walton, Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Old Testament): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 538.

God's Miraculous Deliverance (3:12-18)

3:12 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.

There are certain Jews.... Not certain people. Their Jewish background appears to be particularly offensive.

The **Chaldeans** drew this refusal to worship the statue to the notice of the king. Their phrase **certain Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon** appears to give away their incentive. "Their motivation presumably involved resentment against the foreigners who had been appointed over them...."¹²

They do not serve your gods or worship the gold image which you have set up. "This accusation touches on the classic dilemma of the diaspora Jew who wished to participate in the social and political life of a pagan city."¹³ But not worship their gods.

3:13 Then Nebuchadnezzar, in rage and fury, gave the command to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. So they brought these men before the king.

This appears to be a common response of Nebuchadnezzar.

"For this reason the king was angry and very furious, and gave the command to destroy all the wise men of Babylon." (Daniel 2:12, NKJV)

For Nebuchadnezzar, "His expectation is, "You shall have no other god but me"¹⁴ This flies in the face of these Jews.

3:14 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?"

3:15 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?"

It is somewhat surprising that Nebuchadnezzar is willing to go through the whole process again for these Jews. He did ask them if they had refused to serve his God.

¹² John Joseph Collins and Adela Yarbro Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, ed. Frank Moore Cross, Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), 186.

¹³ John Joseph Collins and Adela Yarbro Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, ed. Frank Moore Cross, Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), 186.

¹⁴ John E. Goldingay, *Daniel*, vol. 30, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1989), 73.

But then he asked them another pertinent question if they continued to defy his demands, ***And who is the god who will deliver you from my hands?***

3:16 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.

“The response is that compliance is out of the question.”¹⁵

Although these children of Israel will not worship these idols, that will not prove true of all the Jews in the exile. Moses had prophesied:

“And the Lord will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where the Lord will drive you. And there you will serve gods, the work of men’s hands, wood and stone, which neither see nor hear nor eat nor smell.” (Deuteronomy 4:27–28, NKJV)

“The threat of the king’s power and the fiery furnace constitute no special reason to reconsider their stance and present no special challenge to the power of their God.”¹⁶

3:18 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.”

But if not... “The implicit question being asked of them is the Adversary’s question about Job, does he only honor God because of the blessings God gives him? God may be trusted to protect us, but our honoring him is not conditional upon his preserving us from every blazing furnace....”¹⁷ Will they honor God even if he does not rescue them? “Scripture contains few more heroic words than *“But even if he does not.”*”¹⁸

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego are quick to answer the king. They are not certain if God will deliver them or not, but one thing they do know, ***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 youths are given no advance revelation to assure them of the outcome. Their confidence is based on the moral certainty of what they ought to do, not on the certainty of revealed foreknowledge.”¹⁹

¹⁵ John Joseph Collins and Adela Yarbro Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, ed. Frank Moore Cross, Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), 187.

¹⁶ John Joseph Collins and Adela Yarbro Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, ed. Frank Moore Cross, Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), 187.

¹⁷ John E. Goldingay, *Daniel*, vol. 30, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1989), 74.

¹⁸ Gleason L. Archer Jr., “Daniel,” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Daniel and the Minor Prophets*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 7 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986), 55.

¹⁹ John Joseph Collins and Adela Yarbro Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, ed. Frank Moore Cross, Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), 188.

“Any Jew of the post-exilic period must have known that God, for whatever reason, does not always deliver the faithful.”²⁰

At this point, it may be asked, “Where is Daniel?” We do not know. He was not there, or he would have stood with these as they had once stood with him. As to where else he might be, we can only suggest that he was about the king’s business somewhere in the vast empire doing his royal duty.

Saved in Fiery Trial (3:19-25)

3:19 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.

the expression on his face changed toward.... This suggests that Nebuchadnezzar was quite familiar with them. He remembers who they were and had some affection for them. He was giving them a second chance, and this is how they treated him!

The answer enraged Nebuchadnezzar. Perhaps he had been so patient with them earlier because of their association with Daniel. But that influence will only go so far. They have defied and insulted him, and he reacts furiously, heating the oven to temperatures far beyond the normal range.

Seven times hotter (3:19). “This is hyperbole. The brick kilns of the time normally operated at around nine hundred degrees centigrade. With the technology available, it would not have been possible even to double this temperature.”²¹ But, the furnace was so hot it killed the soldiers who threw them in its midst.

The furnace “must have been similar to our common lime-kiln, with a perpendicular shaft from the top and an opening at the bottom for extracting the fused lime....”²² This would fit the picture where “in v 22, the executioners are said to *bring up* the three youths, who are then said to *fall into* the furnace.”²³ They then exited the furnace at the bottom opening.

3:20 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

²⁰ John Joseph Collins and Adela Yarbro Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, ed. Frank Moore Cross, Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), 188.

²¹ John H Walton, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Old Testament): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 538.

²² James A. Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, International Critical Commentary (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1927), 202.

²³ John Joseph Collins and Adela Yarbro Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, ed. Frank Moore Cross, Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), 186.

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.*

“...the fierce fire once more underlines the confessors’ hopeless situation.”²⁴

^{3:24} *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.”*

There is a tradition that “the king’s attention is attracted by the sound of singing from the furnace....”²⁵

^{3:25} *“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.”*

But as King Nebuchadnezzar watched these men who were thrown into the furnace, he was **astonished**. He asked his counselors, ***Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?*** They agreed that was the case. Then Nebuchadnezzar responds, ***“Look!” he answered, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire;*** “The three have not been delivered *from* the fire, but they are delivered *in* the fire....”²⁶

and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God. “This is a common expression in Semitic languages for a supernatural being. A polytheist like Nebuchadnezzar would use it for a member of the pantheon of gods.”²⁷

“The divine aide who camps round those who honor God and extricates them from peril (Ps 34:8 [7]) enters the fire himself to neutralize its capacity for harm by the presence of his superior energy.”²⁸

*“But now, thus says the Lord, who created you, O Jacob,
And He who formed you, O Israel:
“Fear not, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by your name;
You are Mine.
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.”*

²⁴ John E. Goldingay, *Daniel*, vol. 30, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1989), 71.

²⁵ John Joseph Collins and Adela Yarbro Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, ed. Frank Moore Cross, Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), 190.

²⁶ John E. Goldingay, *Daniel*, vol. 30, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1989), 74.

²⁷ John H Walton, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Old Testament): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 538.

²⁸ John E. Goldingay, *Daniel*, vol. 30, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1989), 74–75.

For I am the Lord your God,
The Holy One of Israel, your Savior....” (Isaiah 43:1–3, NKJV)

Nebuchadnezzar Praises God (3:26-30)

3:26 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.

Nebuchadnezzar goes near **the mouth of the burning fiery furnace** and commands these **servants of the Most High God** to come out. Once they came out, all took careful note and **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.**

“So the three climbed out—but not the fourth, who had apparently disappeared—and allowed themselves to be inspected by the king and his officials. To their amazement, neither the clothing nor the bodies of the three Hebrews showed any marks of the fire (v.27). Their clothes did not even smell of fire. Only their bonds were gone.”²⁹

3:28 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!

“Before such an awesome display of God’s power, Nebuchadnezzar could only acknowledge his defeat. He had come up against the God he had challenged (v.15): “Then what god will be able to rescue you from my hand?”³⁰ Nebuchadnezzar now has an answer to that question.

Nebuchadnezzar blesses **the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego** and takes note that he **sent His Angel and delivered His servants who trusted in Him, and they have frustrated the king’s word.** For they were willing to yield their bodies to the fire **that they should not serve nor worship any god except their own God!**

3:29 Then Nebuchadnezzar makes 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.”

²⁹ Gleason L. Archer Jr., “Daniel,” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Daniel and the Minor Prophets*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 7 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986), 58.

³⁰ Gleason L. Archer Jr., “Daniel,” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Daniel and the Minor Prophets*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 7 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986), 58.

“In outward expression of this acknowledgment, the king makes Judaism a recognized religion with rights to toleration and respect.”³¹

3:30 Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego in the province of Babylon.

“The prospering of the confessors in provincial affairs brings a final climax. The power of their God and the power of their commitment to him also brings them political power....”³² So, again, **Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego** receive promotions in the kingdom.

In thinking of the purpose of this story, if this were indeed soon after the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of its inhabitants to Babylon, this story would have been of encouragement beyond measure to those who were now faced with problems of faith, not unlike these Jewish heroes.

³¹ John E. Goldingay, *Daniel*, vol. 30, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1989), 75.

³² John E. Goldingay, *Daniel*, vol. 30, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1989), 75.

