

DANIEL (DARE TO BE GOD'S MESSENGER)
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WEEK 2 (911338)
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SERIES: Daniel (Dare To Be God's Messenger)

TITLE: Program 8 – A Hot-Blooded Man

WEDNESDAY

OPEN

You've happened on our program and you're listening for whatever reason. Maybe it's because you believe what we're saying. Maybe it's because you do not believe what I'm saying. Maybe it's because you worship another kind of god or you just don't believe in Christianity. Maybe you're a Hindu. Maybe you're a Muslim. Maybe you're a Buddhist. Maybe you're just an atheist. Why are you listening? What is your god like? Let's talk about your god and my God.

PART ONE

Well today we're moving into Daniel, chapter 3. And as we move into Daniel, chapter 3, if you're going to understand Daniel, chapter 3, then you must take it from Daniel, chapter 2 in to Daniel, chapter 3. So I want to go back and I want us to look at the end of Daniel, chapter 2. Now remember Daniel has just given the king the interpretation of his dream. He told him

what he dreamed and gave him the interpretation of his dream. He has told him what is going to happen in the latter days. And the very fact that Daniel can reveal the dream and reveal the interpretation to Nebuchadnezzar just in a sense blows Nebuchadnezzar out of the water because he sees that Daniel's God is different. And this is what he says: Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face. He fell on his face. He hears this dream. He hears the interpretation of the dream and he falls on his face because he knows, gut level, inside, he knows that it's true and he did homage to Daniel. He did homage because he knows that Daniel knew what he dreamed because I believe the king knew what he dreamed. And so he gave orders to present to him an offering and fragrant incense. Now that kind of, in a sense, sounds like something you would do for a god, or somebody that you are greatly honoring. And the king answered Daniel and said: Now listen to what he says. Surely your God is a God of gods and a Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries. Now when it says surely your God is a God of gods, it's capital G, your God is a God of gods, small g. You say but that's because people that believed in God wrote this so they capitalized one and they didn't capitalize the other because they're prejudiced. And that is a logical reasoning if you do not believe that this is the Word of God. And you may be listening and not believing that this is the Word of God. As I said in the introduction to the program, you may be listening to this teaching because you're curious. Or you may be listening because you're looking for another God, because the gods that you have worshipped haven't fulfilled you. Or you may be listening because you hear about an intimacy with this God that you don't have with your god. You may be listening because the person that represented your god, the prophet that spoke for your god or the prophet that gave the revelation is so different than, than what you're reading and hearing in the Word of God. And I want to commend you; I want to commend you for listening. And God's Word never returns to Him empty. It accomplishes the purpose that God wants it to accomplish. You

say, well, it's not accomplishing anything in my life. I'm just listening and it's not going to accomplish anything in my life. But it is because what it's doing is you're hearing truth and you're rejecting it, so God says in Romans 1, you're going to be without excuse. Now as he talks about God here, and he has this awesome response to Daniel, in chapter 3 the king goes out. Let me read it to you. Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, the height of which was sixty cubits and its width six cubits. Now that's a ten to one. It's an unusual proportion in a sense for a statue. And when you figure cubits it would be about 90 feet high and 9 feet in width. Now this is made of gold. Now, whether it's overlaid in gold or whether it's solid gold or whether it's a form and, and then gold is, is poured on it, we don't know. But we know that when you looked at this statue it was gold. It was gold. So Nebuchadnezzar the king makes an image of gold, and he sets it up in the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. Now what is so neat is there is an archeologist and this archeologist went to the plain of Dura and there he found three mounds. And when he began to uncover them one of the mounds had this humongous, humongous like base. And he could not help but wonder, since it was in the plain of Dura, since it was so mammoth, if this wasn't the platform that the statue must have rested on. I mean it; it is interesting to think of because they're both in the plain of Dura. It says then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent word to assemble the satraps, the prefects, the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates and all the rulers of the provinces to come to the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. All right now, he's ordering all the rulers of the provinces to come along with the satraps, the prefects and, and the governors and all these other people. Who's ruling Babylon? Well if you go back in verse 49 of chapter 2, it says and Daniel made a request of the king, and he appointed, Daniel appointed Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego over the administration of the province of Babylon while Daniel was at the king's court. So who would you expect to see there? Shadrach, Meshach

and Abed-nego. If Daniel stays at the king's court you wouldn't necessarily expect him to be there, but you would expect Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego to be there. It says then the satraps, and by the way, you want to mark every reference to the image. Forgive me for not telling you this. But just mark the image of gold. I colored it yellow and I underlined it in brown. So he made this image, all right, and then he sent word to assemble these people. Verse 3: Then the satraps, the prefects, the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the rulers of the province were assembled for the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. Now Daniel wants us to know, you know, all these levels of, of leadership that were there. He's calling the leadership. He's not calling the masses, but he's calling the leadership to this plain of Dura to stand before this image that Nebuchadnezzar is about to dedicate. Then the herald loudly proclaimed: To you the command is given, O peoples, nations and men of every of language, that at the moment you hear the sound of the horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery, bagpipe, and all kinds of music, you are to fall down and to worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. Hey, what is he saying? He's saying I brought you all out here, all you leaders, not only to dedicate this statue, but to command you to bow before this statue, to give homage to this statue, to indicate that you are, in a sense, serving this statue of gold that I have set up. Now he wants people of every language, men of every language to do this. And he's not saying I'm just going to sound a trumpet. He's got a whole orchestra there, so to speak. So the minute you hear all this music you are to fall down and you are to worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. This is what the herald's saying. But whoever does not fall down and worship shall immediately be cast into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire. Therefore at the time, when all the people heard the sound of the horn, the flute, the lyre, the trigon, the psaltery, bagpipe and all kinds of

music, all the peoples, nations and men of every language fell down and worshiped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. Do you hear another key repeated word here that goes with the image? I hear the word worship. And so I would mark the word worship. It's a very important word because he's calling all these people, men of every language to give homage to the statue. And it says for the reason at that time certain Chaldeans came forward and brought charges against the Jews. What Jews? Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. Why are they there? They're the head of the province of Babylon and all the provincial heads are to be there. And they responded and said to Nebuchadnezzar the king, O king live forever. You yourself O king have made a decree that every man who hears the sound of the horn, the flute, the lyre, the trigon, the psaltery and the bagpipe and all kinds of music is to fall down and worship the golden image, but whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire. There are certain Jews whom you have appointed over the administration of Babylon, namely Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego; these men O king, have disregarded you. They do not serve your gods, nor worship the golden image that you O king have set up. Why would these men be so quick to point out these Jews? Do you think that there might be jealousy? Do you think there might be jealousy because they're Jews and not Babylonians? Do you think there might be jealousy because they get to rule over the province of Babylon, because their friend Daniel is in the king's court? Do you think it's an anti-Semitic move, a move of jealousy, a move of a natural hatred? And what's going to happen to these three Jewish boys? Well if you've never read the story before you're going to be excited. If you read the story before you know, but it's still exciting. And we'll talk about it after this announcement.

PART TWO

Nebuchadnezzar was a hot-blooded man. When he heard the news from these other officials that these Jews had not bowed down to his image he was in a rage. This is the man that has conquered Jerusalem. This is the man that has just been told that he is the head of gold, that he is the king of kings and now here, three Jewish boys that are their captives have just come against his authority and he has heard about it. And it says in verse 13 of Daniel, chapter 3, then Nebuchadnezzar in a rage and anger gave orders to bring up Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego and then these men were brought before the king. And Nebuchadnezzar responded to them and he says is it true Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego that you do not serve my gods or worship the golden image that I have set up? Is it true that you're not worshipping my gods? Is it true that you're not going to bow before this golden image that I, I have set up? This is Nebuchadnezzar. This is the great king of Babylon. This is the head of gold. And while Daniel retained his humility, Nebuchadnezzar just gets more and more puffed up as you will see. This is a man who during the first half of his reign went out and conquered and conquered and conquered so that when he commands them to come to this plain of Dura, there are men from all these different languages there because he rules over them all. And he rules supremely and he will not have his authority challenged in any way. He is in a rage. And now he's in a rage because he wants to know: you mean you don't worship my gods? You mean you're not going to bow before this image? He already has his punishment ready. They didn't all of a sudden kindle a fire. But it told us earlier when the herald blew the trumpet and made his announcement, whoever does not fall down and worship shall immediately, not next week, you will be cast immediately into this furnace that is blazing with fire. Now let me stop and describe the furnace. The furnace was not something that you would walk into this way. The furnace was like a huge, in a sense, rectangle that had a mound of earth going up to it, up one of the sides of its

wall and there was big hole in the top and so that's where they would cast in any dissenters. They would cast them in from the top. In this plain of Dura, they would walk up the side of this earthen mound on one side of that furnace and they would be thrown in from the top. But the king would sit over to the side. There would be a great opening like a door where he could sit and, and watch his dissenters being roasted as crispy critters. So he could watch them burn. He could watch them in their torture. But they would be thrown in from the top. It's not like they would walk in from the bottom. It's far more dramatic to parade them up to the top and then drop them in. And so this is what is about to happen. He gives them another chance though. He is furious. He is in a rage. I hope I've conveyed that rage. Now, if you are ready; he's still in this rage. If you are ready, at the moment that you hear the sound of the horn, the flute, the lyre, the trigon, the psaltery and the bagpipe and all kinds of music, to fall down and worship the image which I have made, very well. Go well with you boys. But if you will not worship, you immediately will be cast into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire; and what god is there who can deliver you? What god is there who can deliver you? Listen carefully to the next words; out of my hands. What god is there who can deliver you out of my hands? Maybe you're listening to find out what kind of a God this program represents. You're about to find out as we continue our study in this chapter. But I just want you to catch what's happening here. And I want you to catch: He's about to throw Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego into that fiery furnace. Now if you'll remember in chapter 1 these young men had Jewish names. They're names were Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. But when they got to Babylon they were given Babylonian names. Let's look at the contrast of these names. Hananiah meant God is gracious or Yahweh is grace. God is gracious or Yahweh is grace. They changed Hananiah's name to Shadrach, which means command of Aku, or Aku, A-k-u. It was one of their gods. So they're saying okay, here is this man who says his name is God is gracious; we're changing his name

to the fact that he's under the command of Aku. He's under the command of our god. And then Mishael; Mishael means who is what God is. In other words, who can contend with God? Who is greater than God? Who is what God is? There isn't anyone. God is all together other than his God. So they take Mishael's name and they change it to Meshach, which says who is what Aku is. Who is what Aku is? Then they take Azariah. Azariah's name in Hebrew meant Yahweh has helped. Yahweh has helped. And they changed it to Abed-nego. Abed-nego means the servant of Nebo, the servant of Nebo. Now just stop and think. Here are three Jewish boys standing before them in the sovereignty of God and named by God. And Hananiah's name means God is gracious. Mishael's name means who is what God is. And Azariah means Yahweh has helped. What are these boys with these names going to do and going to say? Will they bend? Will they bow or will they burn? Well, let's go on and see what it says. And Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to give you an answer concerning this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of this blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O God. But even if he does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up. And Nebuchadnezzar was filled with wrath, and he ordered those boys up to be plunged into that furnace of fire. He had seen God's power, and God's ability to give Daniel insight into the vision, into the dream and into the interpretation and he was awed with God. But you know what? He hadn't submitted to God. Have you ever thought that the reason that he built an image of gold was because he didn't like the image that God had told him about in his dream that only had a head of gold? O beloved, what is your God like?