



Daniel 3 & 4

3: The Fiery Furnace

4: The Pride of a King

Daniel 3

- Nebuchadnezzar formed a new government that was composed of many nations
- He forms a huge statue and wants all nations to be united in the religion of Babylon
- Happened approximately in 594 BC



Daniel 3

- He invited representatives of all nations to the opening ceremony of this new symbol of unity in the empire
- Zedekiah, king of Judah, was probably in attendance



Daniel 3

- Even with the threat of death Daniel's three friends didn't bow down to the statue when the music sounded
- They were loyal to their upbringing that centered on the commandments of God



2nd Commandment

- 10 commandments: “You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to thousands who love me and keep my commandments.” Exodus 20:4-6

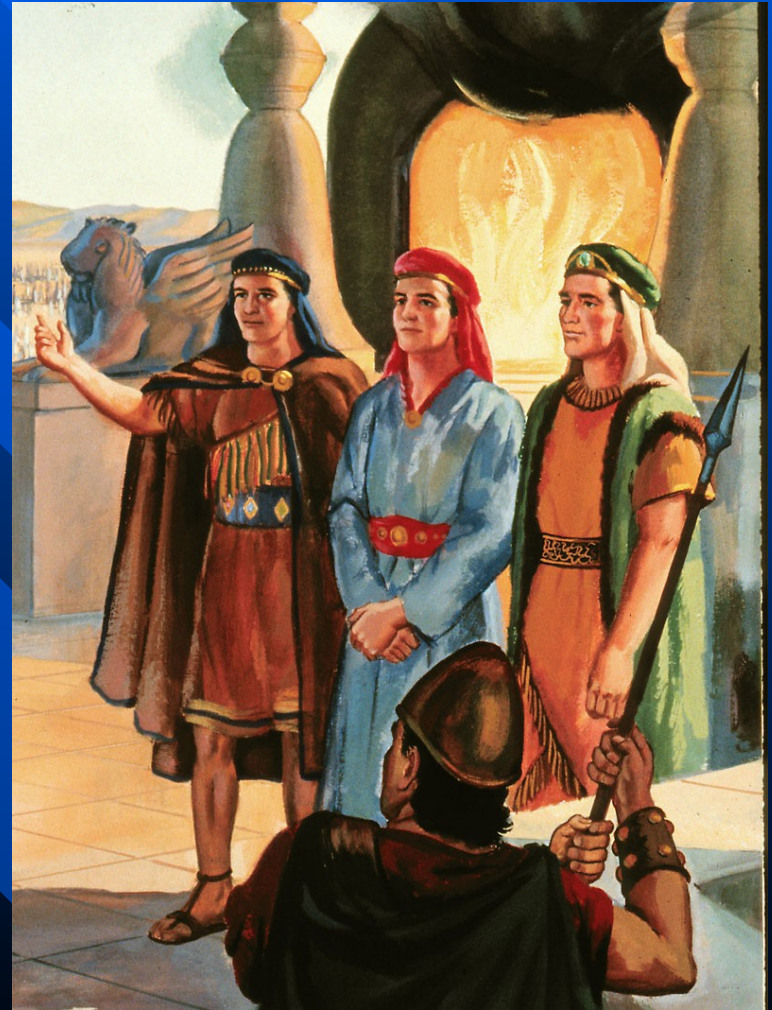
Daniel 3

- The king is enraged and calls the three young Hebrews and threatens them with death if they don't bow down to the image. He says that "no god" will be able to save them if that happens. 3:14,15



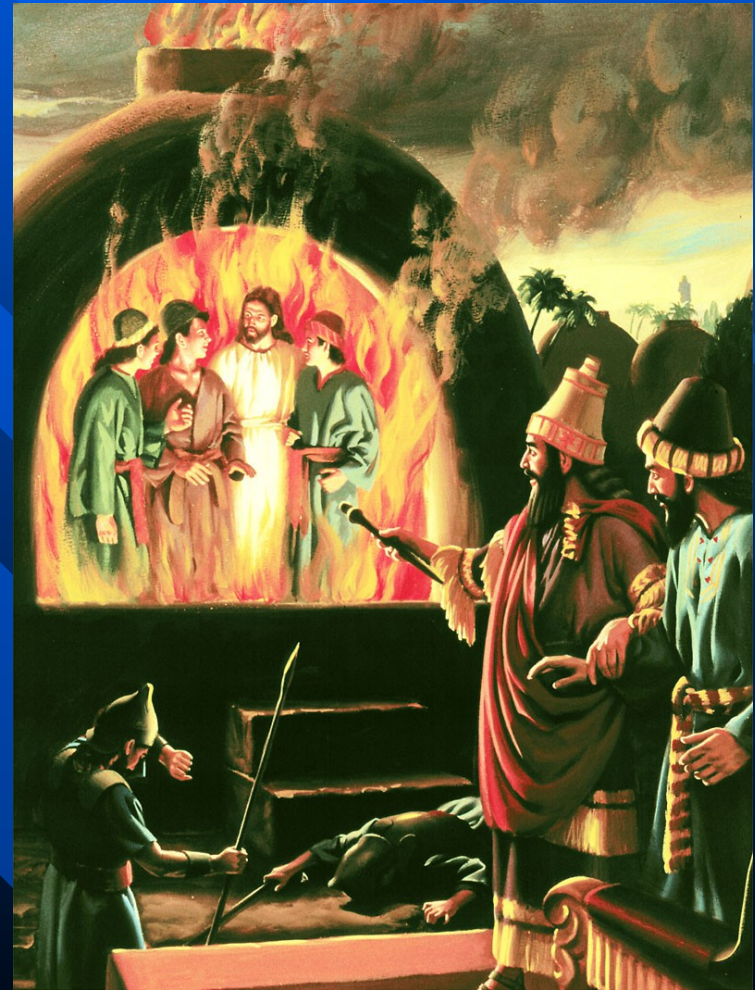
Daniel 3

- The young men refuse to worship any other God but the true God and proclaim that He is able to save them – and even if He doesn't save them, they still will not worship the image. Daniel 3:16-18



Daniel 3

- In his rage the king commands the furnace to be heated 7 times as hot as usual and that the young Hebrews be thrown in.



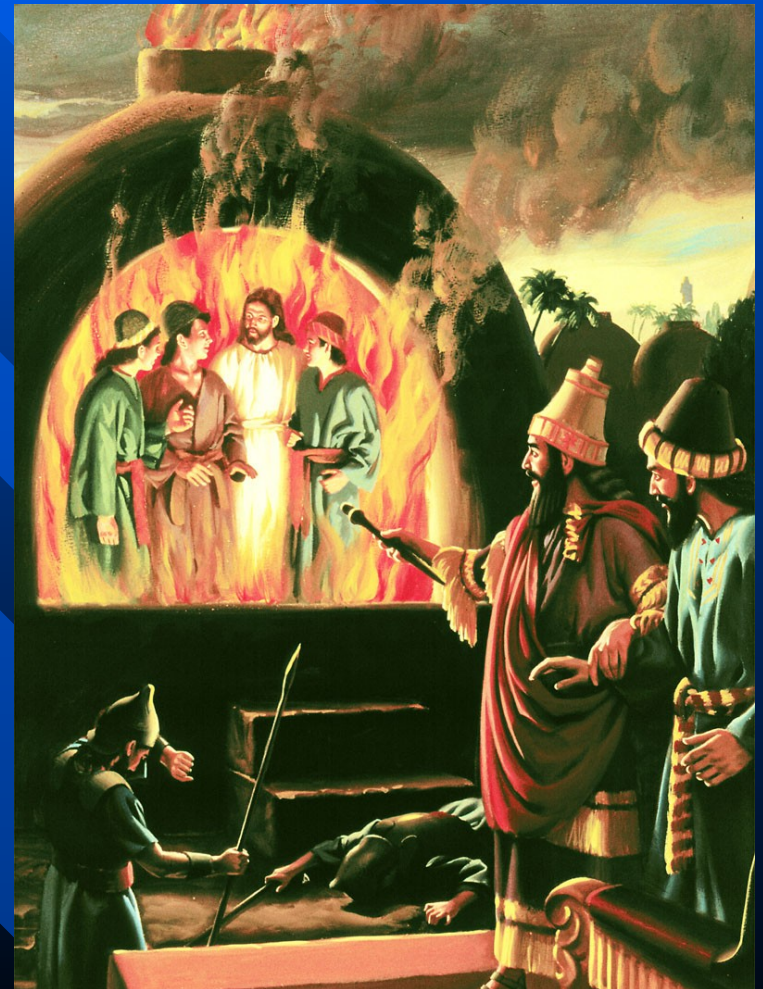
Daniel 3

- The king is amazed – he threw in three young men and now there is four! And none of them are burning up!



Daniel 3

- More than 100 years before this story God promised through the prophet Isaiah: “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.”
Isaiah 43:2,3



Daniel 3

- The Babylonians thought that the gods lived far away from humans. The god of Israel showed that He will always be next to those who honor Him and keep His commandments.



Daniel 3

- The king was so impressed that he ordered everyone in the empire to worship the God of Daniel and his three friends.
- Government religion is never the solution for the social problems of society.
- “Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is freedom” 2 Cor. 3:17

Daniel 4

- This chapter was written by king Nebuchadnezzar himself in 569 BC (approx.)
- By this time Daniel had been his advisor for approximately 35 years.
- This was an important year for the king – he had finally conquered Egypt!

Daniel 4

Introduction
Overview
The Destruction of Jerusalem
The Deportation of Judah
Seventy Years
Treatment of Jews in Babylon
Benefits of the Captivity
Archaeology
Dictionaries
Scriptures
Conclusion



Daniel 4

- The king had another dream and again – he couldn't understand it! (5)
- He gathered all the wise men of Babylon (6)
- Again they couldn't interpret it! (7)
- By this time the king realized that the “Spirit of the holy gods” was in Daniel (8)
- So he told the dream to Daniel and gets the interpretation

Daniel 4

- In the vision the a great tree appeared that was very fruitful. It was cut down for 7 years, but the stump and roots were left.
- Daniel told the king that the dream was again about him – he would lose his mind for 7 years, be driven away from people until he realized that the God of Israel is “sovereign over the kingdoms of the earth” v.25 – but he won’t lose his kingdom completely.

Daniel 4

- Afterwards, Daniel recommends to the king: “Renounce your sins by doing what is right, and your wickedness by being kind to the oppressed. It may be that they your prosperity will continue.” (27)
- Nebuchadnezzar was supposed to be the righteous mediator for the gods himself!

Daniel 4

- In his great summer palace there hung a plaque with the following engraved on it: “May the evil, unrighteous person not enter!” This was to show off the grandiose security system that he had installed.
- And now Daniel had the boldness to tell him that he was that evil, unrighteous person!

Daniel 4

- A year later the king was strolling on the roof of his royal palace enjoying the majesty of his city.



Daniel 4

- He exclaimed, “Is this not the great Babylon that I have built as the royal residence, by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?” (30)

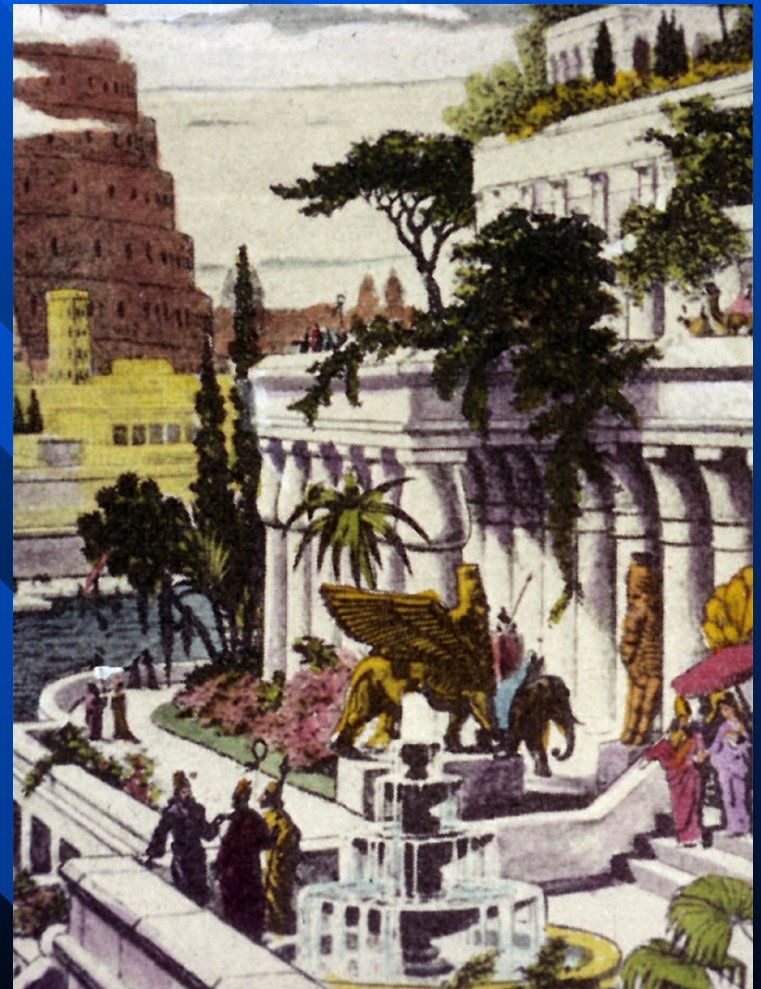


Overview of History of Babylon

- 698 BC – Assyrians destroyed Babylon
- Surrounding nations began to demand that it be restored since it was the residence of the gods
- Nabopolasser (father of Nebuchadnezzar) helped to rebuild it
- Nebuchadnezzar enlarged it three times over and by the time of this vision it was the largest city in the world

Babylon

- Nebuchadnezzar built three massive palaces – one of which housed the world famous “Hanging Gardens of Babylon” (one of the seven wonders of the ancient world)

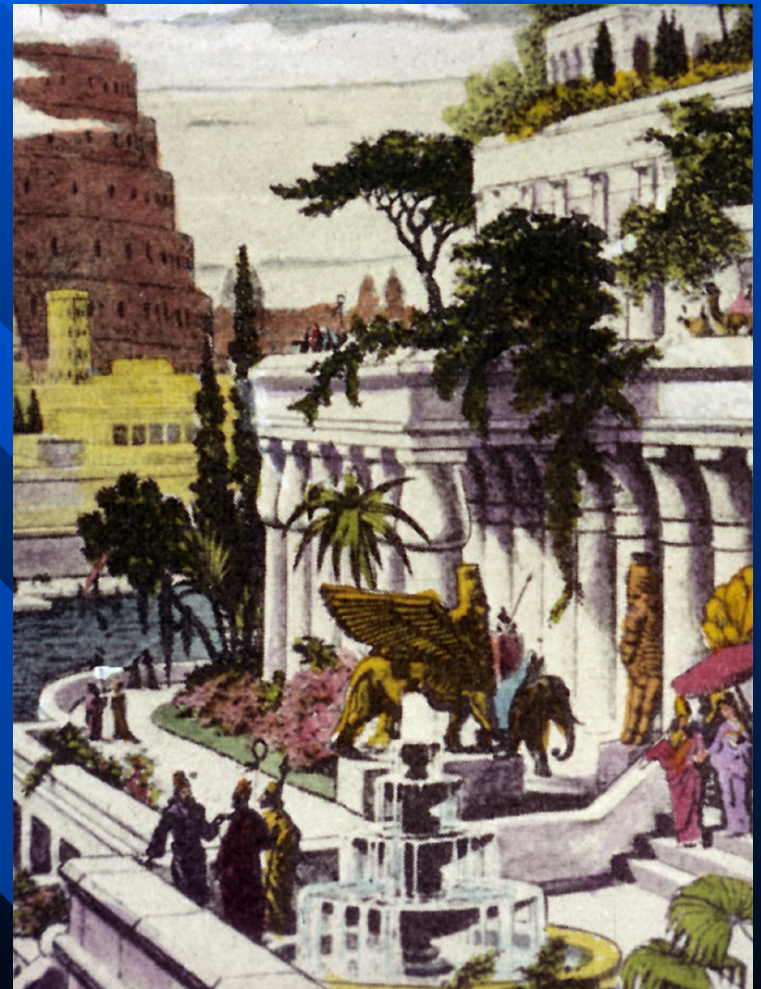


Babylon

- He built wide walls and colored them with many different colors. It was thought to be invincible – walls were from 60-90 ft. high and 20-90 ft. wide.
- Much gold was used in the building of the buildings of Babylon
- He built a beautiful bridge across the Euphrates
- He himself went on an excursion to Lebanon to cut down cedar trees and float them down the Euphrates

Babylon

- He built 53 temples, 955 small sanctuaries, and 384 street altars in honor of the gods!
- The main temple was the 7 storied Etemanki (300 feet high)



Pride

- It makes sense that he felt some sense of pride when he would look out upon the most beautiful city of the world.



Daniel 4

- However, the Bible says that pride leads to disaster – Proverbs 16:18
- God hates the pride of humans – Proverbs 8:13
- A government without the worship of the Living God will not last very long.
- Why? When we are proud, we don't treat people kindly.
- Daniel encouraged the king to “show mercy” (27)

Daniel 4

- The king received God's judgment – and he wandered around the fields of Babylon like a wild beast for 7 years.
- At the end of the time God gave him back his sanity – and he became a worshiper of the Living God of Israel



Daniel 4

- God loves the rulers of the earth and wants them to be saved.
- God has put all kings in place on the earth. Romans 13:1-5
- Kings of the earth will be in Heaven – Rev. 21:24



Next lesson

- Will God deliver the Jews from their exile in Babylon?
- Will God deliver Daniel from his enemies?
- Daniel 5 and 6