




# Dare <sup>TO</sup> Decide

DANIEL 3

# Dare

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- ✓ Read a chapter of Daniel week.
  - ✓ Keep a journal—record God's "mighty acts."
  - ✓ Do what Daniel encourages you to do.

# Each chapter of Daniel asks a question about God—and myself

- Dan 1—Is God **here**? *defile themselves—implies stained before God.*
- Dan 2—Does God **reveal**?  
*No one can reveal it except the gods, and they do not live among men.*
- Dan 3—Can God **rescue**?  
*Then what god will be able to rescue you from my hand?*





# Daniel 3:15, NIV

*... But if you do not worship it, you will be thrown immediately into a blazing furnace. Then what god will be able to **rescue** you from my hand?*



# Daniel 3

- A well-known Bible story—the fiery furnace.
- A mystery: Where's Daniel?
- A big vision (Dan 2)—then a big ego (Dan 3).

**How we see God defines how we see ourselves.**

# Daniel 3

- If we believe the natural world is all there is this story has to be **made up**.
- If we believe God is transcendent—distinct from and above the material world—this story demonstrates his power and protection—**not made up**.



# The Language of Daniel 3

- Five of the names of government leaders are Persian loan words.
- Aramaic would have been the court language of Babylon.
- **Babylon → Medo-Persia → Greece → Rome** (Persian titles would not have been used in later empires and would become unknown).



# Daniel 3—God's Mighty Acts

- God's **patience** is powerful.
- God's **protection** is powerful.
- God's **mercy** is powerful.

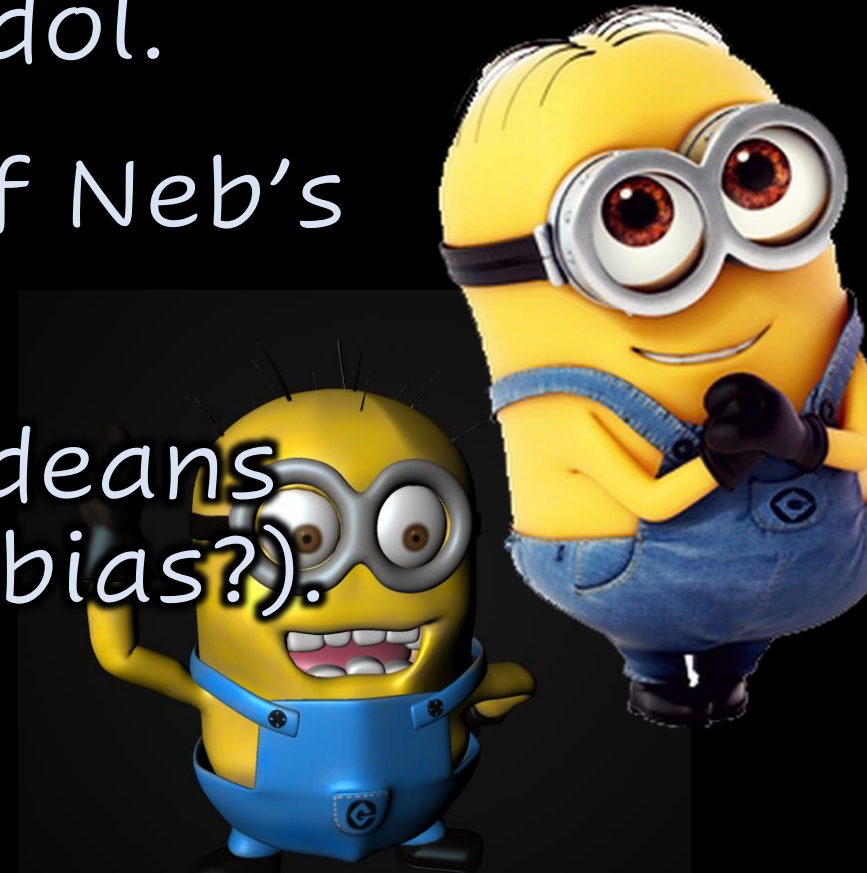
**How we see God defines how we  
see ourselves.**





# God's powerful patience

- The conception and construction of an idol.
- The sham worship of Neb's minions.
- The plot of the Chaldeans (astrologers? Racial bias?).



# Genesis 15:13,16, NIV

*Then the Lord said to him, “Know for certain that for four hundred years your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own and that they will be enslaved and mistreated there.... In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure.”*



## 2 Peter 3:9, NIV

*The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.*



# 1 Timothy 1:16, NIV

*But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life.*



# God's powerful patience

- Any notion that God is hot-tempered, out-of-control, and impulsive does not align with the patience of God seen in Daniel 3.





# God's powerful protection

- The furnace was used for smelting metal.
- Shaped like a giant milk bottle with heat escaping from the top and fuel, ore, and finished product add/removed from the bottom.
- The Code of Hammurabi detailed punishment by burning.



# God's powerful protection

- King Neb is convinced that laws of physics and chemistry are on his side. He has the military might to enforce his will.
- Who is the fourth man?
- Why no scent or singeing?
- A bureaucracy full of witnesses!



# God's Powerful Mercy

- The wages of sin is death?
- Who died in this story? Who lived on? By whose power are they spared?
- How might this impact our praying?



What if Neb's ideas of God have been all wrong? A God who...

- endures Neb's ego to reveal His patience with sinners.
- saves despite political power, laws of physics and thermodynamics.
- seeks people personally to save them.





Since our God—patient with  
sinners, able to rescue his  
people, merciful toward those  
who resist him—what kind of  
people ought we be?





King Neb had direct experience with the  
living God! But is he changed?

Neb remains a debated mystery for now.

But what kind of people ought we be?



Romans 9:16, NIV

*It does not, therefore, depend on human desire or effort, but on God's mercy.*



# Romans 9:22-23, NIV

*What if God, although choosing to show his wrath and make his power known, bore with great patience the objects of his wrath—prepared for destruction? What if he did this to make the riches of his glory known to the objects of his mercy, whom he prepared in advance for glory—even us ...?*







# Dare <sup>TO</sup> Decide

IF THIS IS YOUR GOD  
WHO WILL YOU BE?

# Daniel 3:17-18, NIV

*“If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty’s hand.*

*“But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.”*

