**Daniel 2:46-49 46Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face, prostrate before Daniel, and commanded that they should present an offering and incense to him. 47The king answered Daniel, and said, “Truly your God *is* the God of gods, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, since you could reveal this secret.” 48Then the king promoted Daniel and gave him many great gifts; and he made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief administrator over all the wise *men* of Babylon. 49Also Daniel petitioned the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego over the affairs of the province of Babylon; but Daniel *sat* in the gate of the king.**

**Daniel 3:1-7 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. 2And 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. 3So 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. 4Then 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; 6and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.” 7So 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.**

Last week, we left Daniel and king Nebuchadnezzar at the end of the interpretation of the dream. We realized that this dream predicted the future: The Medo-Persian empire, then the Greek empire, then the Roman empire, and finally the coming of Christ and the establishment of a kingdom that will never perish, but be passed eternally to Christ and those that believe in Him.

So we rejoin Daniel tonight. I purposefully chose to cover the last of chapter 2 as we start chapter 3 to demonstrate the fickleness of this king, and the fickleness of man in general. At the end of chapter 2, the king is on his face, yet by the beginning of chapter 3, the king is demanding everyone bow to him. This is true of people as well. I once had someone say jokingly (I hope), “As long as I’m happy, you have no one else to worry about.” Yet, Jesus is very clear when He says we are to be servant of all, if we are to be first in the Kingdom. The Bible says – esteem others more highly then self. Many are happy as long as they get their way. This shouldn’t be so.

Verses 46-47 *Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face, prostrate before Daniel, and commanded that they should present an offering and incense to him. 47The king answered Daniel, and said, “Truly your God is the God of gods, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, since you could reveal this secret.”*Nebuchadnezzar is overwhelmed. Imagine someone being able to tell you, with incredible accuracy, a dream you had. Being able to detail it alone is incredible, but then the interpretation of the dream and the centuries that it will cover leaves the king gob smacked, as my grandmother used to say. He falls down before Daniel and commands presents and offering – this would have been shocking to anyone in Babylon and certainly to the people there at that moment! The king bowed to no one. He acknowledges the God of Daniel as God of gods, the Lord of kings. Nebuchadnezzar has what seems to be a momentary conversion, seed falling shallow ground, among thorns, springing up, withering in chapter 3.

Verses 48-49 *Then the king promoted Daniel and gave him many great gifts; and he made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief administrator over all the wise men of Babylon. 49Also Daniel petitioned the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego over the affairs of the province of Babylon; but Daniel sat in the gate of the king.* Daniel is given many gifts, promoted to ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and made the chief administrator over the wise men, the Chaldeans, who we recall despised Daniel. This will play into future events in the Book of Daniel. Daniel would have been about 22 years old. Something like this could go to a young man’s head! But Daniel doesn’t his companions, the ones that he prayed with for the dream to be revealed. Humility. He requests that Meshach, Shadrach, and Abed-Nego be honored and promoted as well. He esteems his brothers.

Now we change gears and move to Daniel 3. Verse 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.* The world is fickle – the dream apparently is forgotten. God blesses and we praise… then, we forget and next thing we know we’re questioning if God even loves us anymore. Both Ephesians 4 and James 1 speaks about unstable focus and the world tossing men to and fro. Nebuchadnezzar makes a colossus! A huge image of gold – unlike the one with the silver, bronze, and iron. Perhaps he hopes to change the dream by making the image all of gold – regardless, this is a rebellion against God and shows that he is worshipping himself. Satan loves to mix the truth and lies – he loves to misquote scripture, cast doubt on promises, and try to make wrong seem right. He’s certainly doing that today in our country and the same was happening then. The goal is always the same – separate us from the Truth.

The height is 3 score cubits, 60 cubits, about 90 feet tall by 9 feet wide. From ground to top of head, this would have been about as tall as a 8-9 story building. Set up on a plain about 25 miles southeast of Babylon.

Verses 2-3 *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. 3So 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.*This dedication of the golden image is going to be a big deal. Nebuchadnezzar commands all the highest ranking men of the kingdom to gather at the dedication. Many would travel hundreds of miles. We must never kid ourselves that this was an invitation. To fail to attend would be frowned up. This is the set-up of almost all false religions… fail to attend to the latest thing the godless have dreamed up and find out how tolerant and inclusive the godless are. Nebuchadnezzar will reveal that he is neither tolerant nor inclusive of those who refuse to kneel to the idol… and this world is the same. Mammon – Satan – demands full commitment and will never settle for less.

Verses 4-5 *Then a herald cried aloud: “To you it is commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, 5that 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.* Music is the signal to kneel to the image. Music soothes the savage beast. It has impact on the mind. Hear the music and worship. What harm can that do? Listen to the music today that speaks wickedness into the minds of young people. Listen to the music that celebrates fornication, adultery, lewdness, homosexuality… listen as the songs sing about the abuse of women, the killing of police… wickedness is found in music… then and today. I’ve told many of our young ladies in this church to never accept the disrespect they hear on the radio today. Yet, society would call me racist, homophobic, and sexist because I don’t bow to the image. It is no accident that Nebuchadnezzar connects wickedness and music. It is no accident today either.

Verses 6 *and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.”* If you don’t worship, if you choose not to, we are not tolerant… we are not inclusive… we do not respect your choice. We will encourage you with the threat of death! You will be cast into the burning fiery furnace! Nebuchadnezzar is not asking… he is dictating the who, when, what, where and how the people will worship. If they don’t, death is the consequence. Therein lies one of the greatest truths of God – He will never force anyone to worship. He is the God of choice. Consequences are earned by the chooser…. Not given by God.

Verse 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.* So the music starts and we see the result…. The people fall down and worship… except for Meshach, Shadrach, and Abed-Nego… and I’ve no doubt Daniel. In the end, we always have a choice. Right choice doesn’t mean no consequences…. Doing the right thing doesn’t mean no suffering… in fact Jesus says we will suffer because we choose Him. The world hates the Light. Those who are in the Light will find hate in this world. Next week, we will see the consequences and we will see the deliverance of God.

Faithful, focused, and fearless – Daniel and his friends continue to be a perfect example for those of us in this world today. In ungodly times and in an ungodly nation, the Godly will encounter trials, troubles, and tribulations. Adversities will be all around. Our God is in the fire with us. He will deliver. We must remain faithful.