

# EXILIC & POST-EXILIC PROPHETS OF THE BIBLE

Senior Adults & Friends Bible Study — Summit View Church of Christ  
Summer 2022

## PART FOUR, SECTION 1

### Three Faithful Jews and the Blazing Furnace

#### The Situation in Jerusalem

*probably 591 BC*

**2 Chronicles 36:13-14** — Judah's King Zedekiah \_\_\_\_\_ against Babylon's King Nebuchadnezzar, despite having taken an oath of fealty to him in God's name.

- *Recall Numbers 30. Would it ever be acceptable to break an oath you've made in God's name? If so, when?*

- *From the tone of the writer of Chronicles, does it appear that God did or did not approve of Zedekiah's breaking his oath to Nebuchadnezzar?*

- Furthermore, all the leaders of the \_\_\_\_\_ and the people became more and more \_\_\_\_\_, following all the detestable practices of the nations and defiling the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord, which he had consecrated in Jerusalem.

- *Recall Ezekiel 8. What was one way the people of Judah were defiling God's temple?*

*January 15, 588 BC*

**2 Kings 25:1** — What did Nebuchadnezzar do to Jerusalem?

- *Why? (Recall 2 Kings 24:20b / 2 Chronicles 36:13.)*

### DANIEL 3 — Three Jews Face Pressure to Worship a Babylonian Idol

*Date:* Unknown; possibly 588 or 587 BC — This story took place sometime between about 604 BC (when Shadrach, Meschach, and Abednego were appointed as officials over the province of Babylon; see Daniel 2:49 & 3:12) and 561 BC, when Nebuchadnezzar died. Our best guess at a more precise date comes from the Greek Septuagint (200 BC Greek translation) of Daniel 3:1, which begins, "In his eighteenth year Nebuchadnezzar the king made a golden image..." That year was about 588-587 BC, during his siege of Jerusalem far to the southwest. The Masoretic (Hebrew and Aramaic language) text of Daniel, however, does not provide a date, so the validity of this date is uncertain enough that major English translations usually don't even reflect it in their footnotes.

3:1 — What did King Nebuchadnezzar make?

- How big was it? (A cubit was roughly 18 inches.)  
\_\_\_\_\_ cubits high, \_\_\_\_\_ cubits wide = \_\_\_\_\_ feet high, \_\_\_\_\_ feet wide
- What was it made out of? \_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Notes...**

"Large statues of this kind, though made of wood, were plated with gold." *NIV Archaeological Study Bible 1389, note on Daniel 3:1*

"It is unclear whether the image represented Nebuchadnezzar or one of his gods. All of the leading officials from throughout his empire were gathered before the statue for its dedication, as a public statement that the unity of Nebuchadnezzar's empire was rooted in the common worship of the golden image." *ESV Study Bible 1712, note on Daniel 3:3*

**Historical Note...**

Nebuchadnezzar set up his great statue "on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon" (3:1). This was the same region in which a much earlier tower was set up. **See Genesis 11:1-9.** What was that structure? Are there any ways in which these two magnificent constructions might have been similar in God's eyes?

3:4-6 — What did the herald command all the various officials to do when the music played?

- What was the penalty for anyone who refused?

**Theological Note...**

3:8 says, "At this time some astrologers came forward and denounced the Jews." By this careful wording, the writer indicates that this attack on Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego was an attack not on these three men alone, but on all Jews everywhere who would refuse to fall down and worship the gods of Babylon.

3:12 — The 3 Jews who refused to serve Nebuchadnezzar's gods or worship the image of gold he had set up were \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

- Recall Daniel 1:6-7. What were their Hebrew names?  
\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_

3:13-15 — What was Nebuchadnezzar's attitude toward the 3 Jews at this point?

- How did he first try to resolve this situation?

3:16-18 — How did the 3 Jews reply to Nebuchadnezzar?

- first, the God we serve...
- second, even if he doesn't deliver us...

3:19 — What was Nebuchadnezzar's attitude toward the 3 Jews now?

3:19-20 — What did the king command?

- for the furnace...
- for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego...

3:22 — What happened to the soldiers who carried out the king's command?

3:24-25 — What, in the fire, surprised the king? (From verse 28, who was it?)

3:26 — When he called the 3 Jews out of the fire, what title did Nebuchadnezzar give to their God?

3:28 — According to Nebuchadnezzar, what had the 3 Jews done right?

3:29 — What did the king decree concerning anyone who said anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego?

3:30 — What happened to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego?