



# CAPITOL COMMISSION™

## Arrogance Blinds Wisdom (Daniel 3:1)

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*God had given King Nebuchadnezzar a frightening vision. Daniel was empowered to interpret the dream and its picture of future events. The king acknowledged God's sovereign position while referring to Him as Daniel's God, rather than accepting the true Sovereign. Missing the point of the revelation, the King builds a giant statue of himself. He then requires all people in the kingdom to bow in the presence of the image. To what people or things do we give our highest value (worship) today?*

### INTRODUCTION

God was rebuking His chosen nation (and its people) for unrepentant sin. The prophet Isaiah continually warned the people of Israel and their three successive kings. God used the secular nation Assyria to take the northern part of Israel into captivity in 722 B.C.<sup>1</sup> The southern part of Israel (Judah) was spared. Reformation became a priority under Judah's King Hezekiah. However, empty ritualism (meaningless ceremonial acts) and idolatry (adoring a person or thing) soon became common. The Lord gave the southern kingdom (Judah) over to the king of Babylon in 605 B.C. (Daniel 1:2). The prophets Isaiah, Hosea, Micah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah warned Israel of the pending disaster and the need to repent. Their prophecy was ridiculed but the predictions came true.<sup>2</sup>

### THE LORD GOD IS SOVEREIGN

*Daniel 1:2 And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into (Nebuchadnezzar's) hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god.*

Yahweh, the God of Israel was punishing the nation for the people's sins. God used the king of a secular nation (Babylon) for this purpose. However, Nebuchadnezzar was arrogant and believed that he was sovereign.

Note the relatively casual mention of the articles taken from the temple. Among these were gold vessels, drinking cups that were used in the Jewish temple by designated priests for ceremonial purposes. These will later play a part in God's punishment of Babylon (Daniel 5). Heathen rulers often would demonstrate their superiority (or the superiority of their gods) through conquest and often the capture or destruction of the other nation's idols.<sup>3</sup> Do you believe that this practice continues in the world today, even in America?

### THE KING IS ARROGANT

*Daniel 3:1 Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon*

The arrogant king had a ninety foot statue erected with its entire figure overlaid in gold. The face was made in his image. The vision of the statue was given in a dream (Daniel 2) to demonstrate God's sovereignty to Nebuchadnezzar and to encourage the displaced people of Judah and us future readers. The image given by God to Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 2:28) and revealed by Daniel (2:31) featured a head of gold and a series of less glorious materials down to toes of iron mixed with clay. The climax of the vision was that of a stone cut out of a mountain without human hands which smashed the statue. Those crushed building materials are turned into powder and blown away. The stone becomes a kingdom which never ends (Daniel 2:44-45). God had granted that the kingdom of Babylon (represented by the head of gold) would feature the most glorious material (but not the strongest). Yet Nebuchadnezzar had the entire statue overlaid with gold as if to add longevity to his kingdom. Missing was the stone representing the kingdom of Christ (out of the Rock without human hands) which puts an end to all worldly kingdoms and endures forever. The image in the king's dream was meant as a message rather than as an object to be worshipped.

### BIBLE STUDIES

LEADERS/LEGISLATORS: WEDNESDAYS 7 -7:50 AM, CAPITOL ROOM 142 SOUTH

STAFF & GUESTS: WEDNESDAY S 12:05 – 12:55 PM, CAPITOL ROOM 142 SOUTH

# Capitol Commission Kansas

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### THE IDOL IS DEDICATED

*Daniel 3:2 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counselors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.*

The king commands his leaders at every level to come and see the image representing Nebuchadnezzar and the kingdom he has built. It is acceptable to be proud of our accomplishments. However, the earlier vision given the king made it clear that God was Sovereign and would ultimately replace the man-made kingdoms with one that would endure forever. Babylon would be a relatively temporary kingdom which God would replace with a successor. Our personal existence in this world is brief, but our hope is to be part of the eternal Kingdom made from the Rock which is Christ (Psalm 47, Jeremiah 7:11).

### WORSHIP IS DEMANDED

*Daniel 3:4-5 Then a herald shouted out, "People of all races and nations and languages, listen to the king's command! When you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes, and other musical instruments, bow to the ground to worship King Nebuchadnezzar's gold statue.*

Government would be out of order if it required us to worship a statue. What if the government requires us to unquestionably support a charismatic leader, a policy, a theory, or an ideal? Consider the theory of evolution: Like the gold statue, this theory portrays that the fittest survive, whether a biological mutation, a government, or an ideal. Evolution eliminates God as the king did in modifying this image. We claim to explain all things as natural progression or developed from previous causes. Evolution then places man in the center of the universe.<sup>4</sup>

### CONCLUSION

A key purpose of the book of Daniel is to encourage those who trust in Yahweh, the God of Israel, God of the Bible. This was clear to Daniel in the image given by God to King Nebuchadnezzar. A key theme of the book is that God is in control! We see that the world's kingdoms (and leaders) come and pass away at God's will. Our charge is to be a Daniel. We can serve with an excellent spirit where our Lord has placed us (Daniel 6:3). We are commanded to submit (and pray for) those whom God has placed in authority over us (1 Peter 2:13) (1 Timothy 2:1-4). We can point others to the source of our hope as we trust God through various trials during this relatively brief life here on earth (1 Peter 3:15).

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<sup>1</sup> John MacArthur, The MacArthur Study Bible. (Thomas Nelson Inc.). p934.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p1199.

<sup>3</sup> James Montgomery Boice, Daniel: An Expository Commentary. (BakerBooks). p17.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p16.