

**20:20 Vision Ministries – Devotions by Roger Browning**  
**Week 32 (August 2-8, 2015)**

In this week's study, we will continue to explore the proper response of a Christian when the laws of God clash with the laws of the government.

**Sunday**, August 2 (read Daniel 3:1-7)

*"Whoever does not fall down and worship will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace." (Daniel 3:6)*

King Nebuchadnezzar has made a profession of faith recorded in Daniel 2:47, but he makes a horrible decision when he erects a huge statue of himself for the citizens of his kingdom to worship (v. 1-6). Many new believers today do the same thing! They accept Jesus as their **Savior** to pay the **penalty** for their sins, but they still remain on the throne of their own lives instead of allowing Him to be their Lord. The king commands the people to attend a special dedication service featuring all kinds of music, during which they will fall down and worship the image of gold. Those who refuse to comply will be thrown into a blazing furnace (v. 6). This will be a problem for the Jews who are being held captive in Babylon, because they are forbidden to worship idols. We will see how this plays out in tomorrow's devotion.

**Monday**, August 3 (read Daniel 3:8-12)

*"They neither serve your gods nor worship the image of gold you have set up." (Daniel 3:12b)*

In today's text, the goal of the Babylonian astrologers is identical to the goal of the current radical Muslims: They want to destroy the Jews and remove them from the face of the earth. Like this king, those who ignore the teachings of the Bible will be oblivious to the issues behind the headline news. They will accept the politically correct lie that the Muslims only want the Jews to give up some more land in exchange for peace. Just look at a map and you will see that the Jews have very little land, far less than God has promised that they will have when Jesus establishes His kingdom on earth (Genesis 13:14-17). The Jews will **always** live in their land and will **never** cease to be a nation (see Jeremiah 31:35-37). The writings of the Koran are challenging the true Word of God! Nebuchadnezzar makes a terrible mistake because he does not understand the agenda of the astrologers. Be sure that you do not do the same as you listen to liberal reporters who see only the politically correct version of the news!

**Tuesday**, August 4 (read Daniel 3:13-15)

*"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 3:15b)*

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego are faced with standing true to the Word of God by disobeying the king's command, or following the crowd in order to save their lives. What will you do? The day is coming fast when you will be forced to make the same decision unless God calls His Church home in the rapture before it comes to this. Today, "all kinds of music" is instrumental in programming our youth to deny God and to accept the immoral teachings of society. The irony of it all is that those who worship the gods of this age will eventually be thrown into the fire of hell. "Choose for yourself this day whom you will serve . . . but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15).

**Wednesday**, August 5 (read Daniel 3:16-18)

*“But even if He does not, we want you to know, O King, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.” (Daniel 3:18)*

I want you to meditate on the three verses in today’s text because you will soon need them in your own defense. My prayer is that you and I will say similar words when we are brought before the authorities. God is able to call us home in the rapture before these events take place, and He is also able to protect us in the midst of the turmoil, but “even if He does not,” we want the world to know that we will not serve its gods or worship its images (v. 18). I do not know what hardships, trials and persecutions we will soon face, but I do know one thing for sure that He has promised: “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.” So we say with confidence, “The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me” (Hebrews 13:5b-6)?

**Thursday**, August 6 (read Daniel 3:19-23)

*So these men, wearing their robes, trousers, turbans and other clothes, were bound and thrown into the blazing furnace. (Daniel 3:21)*

Many Christians falsely believe that God will keep them from all persecutions and trials. Instead, He promises, “No, **in** all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us” (Romans 8:37, emphasis mine) and “. . . we know that **in** all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28, emphasis mine) and “**In** this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world” (John 16:33, emphasis mine). Those who get disillusioned with God usually do so because some TV preacher has taught them that troubles will never come their way. God does not keep the three Hebrew children out of the fire, but He is with them **in** the fire.

**Friday**, August 7 (read Daniel 3:24-27)

*He said, “Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth looks like a son of the gods.” (Daniel 3:25)*

Isaiah 43:2b proclaims, “When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze.” The three Hebrew children must have claimed this promise as the government had them thrown into the fire. Not only did they escape the flames that killed the soldiers (v. 22), they had no evidence of fire or smoke anywhere on their bodies (v. 27), except that the ropes that bound them were gone. Today, we have the New Testament, so we know that this “fourth Man” is none other than Jesus. Nebuchadnezzar has made a profession of faith (2:47), but he still worships many gods (v. 25). The sight of this miracle, however is about to make the king declare loyalty to the true God a second time.

**Saturday**, August 8 (read Daniel 3:28-30)

*Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the province of Babylon. (Daniel 3:30)*

This story ends well for everyone (except the soldiers, v. 22) because the Hebrews choose to trust the promises of God instead of the declaration of the government. Nebuchadnezzar makes a second profession of faith and makes it unlawful to speak against God (v. 28-29). That is exactly opposite from the government declarations coming out of Washington, even as I write this devotion. The young men are promoted to new positions, allowing them to influence more people (v. 30). Can you trust God enough to follow His Word, regardless of the consequences? You’ll be glad you did when you see Him face to face!