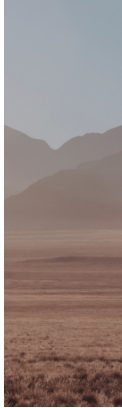


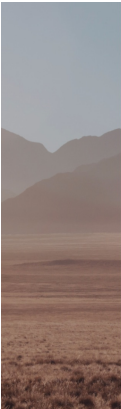


Daniel 3:1 –7:

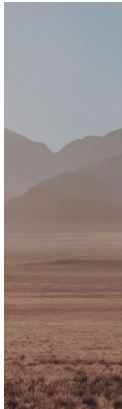
1 King Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold, whose height was sixty cubits and its breadth six cubits. He **set it up** on the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. ...



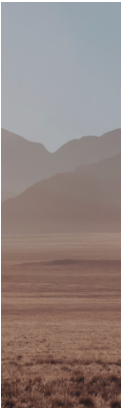
2 Then King Nebuchadnezzar sent to gather the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces to come to the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had **set up**.



3 Then the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces gathered for the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had **set up**. And they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had **set up**.



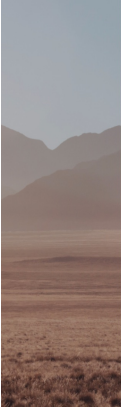
4 And the herald proclaimed aloud, "You are commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, 5 that when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, you are to fall down and **worship** the golden image that King Nebuchadnezzar has **set up**."



6 And whoever does not fall down and **worship** shall immediately be cast into a burning fiery furnace." 7 Therefore, as soon as all the peoples heard the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, all the peoples, nations, and languages fell down and **worshiped** the golden image that King Nebuchadnezzar had **set up**.

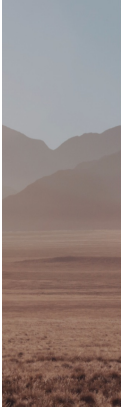


The pressure is real.

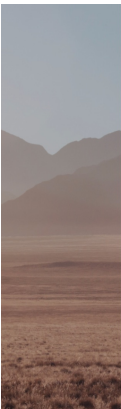


What this pressure might look like (4):

1) It might be blatant and unavoidable.



Verse 1: King Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold, whose height was sixty cubits and its breadth six cubits. He set it up on the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.

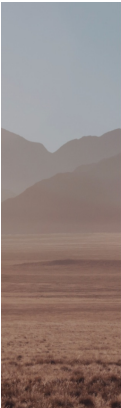


Verses 4-6: 4 And the herald proclaimed aloud, "You are commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, 5 that when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, you are to fall down and worship the golden image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. 6 And whoever does not fall down and worship shall immediately be cast into a burning fiery furnace."

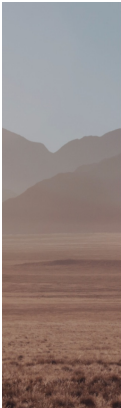


What this pressure might look like (4):

2) The pressure to conform (herd mentality)



Verses 4-7: 4 And the herald proclaimed aloud, "You are commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, 5 that when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, you are to fall down and worship the golden image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. ...



6 And whoever does not fall down and worship shall immediately be cast into a burning fiery furnace." 7 Therefore, as soon as all the peoples heard the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, all the peoples, nations, and languages fell down and worshiped the golden image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.



The pressure to conformity:

- "Everyone else is doing it"
- People of influence, people you look up to, people you want to impress
- Examples...



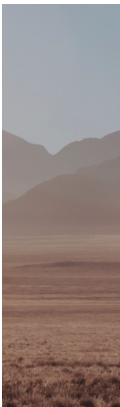
What this pressure might look like (4):

3) Malicious intent

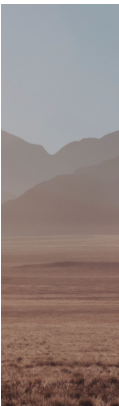


Verses 8–12:

8 Therefore at that time certain Chaldeans came forward and maliciously accused the Jews. 9 They declared to King Nebuchadnezzar, "O king, live forever! 10 You, O king, have made a decree, that every man who hears the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, shall fall down and worship the golden image. ...



11 And whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast into a burning fiery furnace. 12 There are certain Jews *whom you have appointed* over the affairs of the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These men, O king, pay no attention to you; they do not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up."



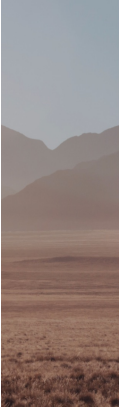
What this pressure might look like (4):

4) Personal pressure from authority that has direct consequences



Verses 13–15:

13 Then Nebuchadnezzar in furious rage commanded that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be brought. So they brought these men before the king. 14 Nebuchadnezzar answered and said to them, "Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the golden image that I have set up?"



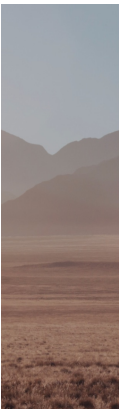
15 Now if you are ready when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, to fall down and worship the image that I have made, well and good. But if you do not worship, you shall immediately be cast into a burning fiery furnace. *And who is the god who will deliver you out of my hands?"*



Application: There will be pressure to compromise

To Christian friends...

A challenge



Dale Davis: *"The writer holds before you this episode because he wants you to make the same response as Daniel's friends: I will believe and obey the first commandment even if it kills me (and it may)."*

The word "Worship" is mentioned 11x in Daniel 3!



Application: There will be pressure to compromise

To Christian friends...

A comfort



a. The repetition and silliness.

Example 1: The "important folk"
"the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces..." (verse 2, 3, 27)



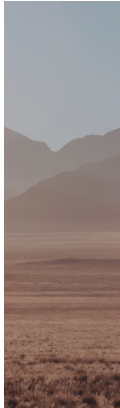
a. The repetition and silliness.

Example 2: "the musical pomp"
"when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music..." (Verse 4, 7, 10, 15)

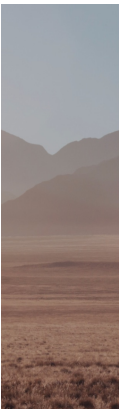


b. Sarcasm: this is a “set up” job.

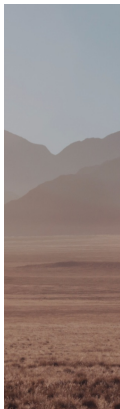
- “Set up” is mentioned 9 times!



Dale Davis: “...by being both solemn and sarcastic the writer is saying: ‘This is a fearful trial, but can you see, in another vein, what a farce it is? A god that’s made? An image ‘set up’?’ That may not take away all the trembling but at least you know there is no truth in it.” ...



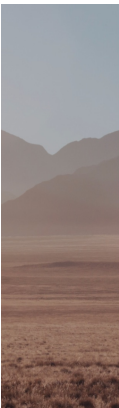
“If once you see the farce, the emptiness behind the facade of power, then you will be less likely to be intimidated by the pagan pressure. The matter the friends face is deadly serious; but the manner in which the story is told is subtly humorous; and the humour is intended to help you stand against the pressure. Holy laughter helps you to endure, especially if you see the real weakness behind the veneer of power.”



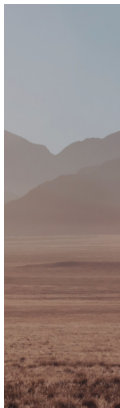
Application: There will be pressure to compromise

To Christian friends

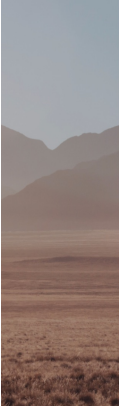
To exploring friends...



David Foster Wallace: “In the day-to-day trenches of adult life, there is actually no such thing as atheism. There is no such thing as not worshipping. **Everybody worships...** And an outstanding reason for choosing some sort of God or spiritual-type thing to worship ... is that **pretty much anything else you worship will eat you alive.** ...



If you worship money and things – if they are where you tap real meaning in life – then you will never have enough. Never feel you have enough. It’s the truth. Worship your own body and beauty and sexual allure and you will always feel ugly, and when time and age start showing, you will die a million deaths before they finally plant you. ...

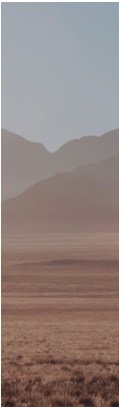


...Worship power – you will feel weak and afraid, and you will need ever more power over others to keep the fear at bay. Worship your intellect, being seen as smart – you will end up feeling stupid, a fraud, always on the verge of being found out. And so on.”

- Wallace, Kenyon College Commencement, 2005

Conviction over Compromise

1. Why it is needed
2. What it looks like (How did Daniel's friends respond?)



Verses 16–18: 16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, **we have no need to answer you in this matter.** 17 If this be so, **our God whom we serve is able to deliver us** from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. 18 **But if not,** be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.”



What conviction over compromise looks like:

- 1) There is predetermined conviction

Verse 16: “**we have no need to answer you in this matter.**”



What conviction over compromise looks like:

- 2) A deep reflection and reality of God's power at work and is at hand.

Verse 17: “**our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace...**”





Conviction over Compromise:

Fear of God will lead to conviction.

Fear of man will lead to compromise.



What conviction over compromise looks like:

3) "But if not..."

Verse 18: But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.



Conviction over Compromise

1. Why it is needed

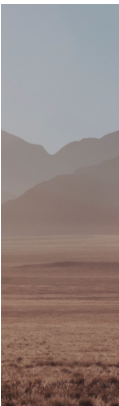
2. What it looks like

3. What to know when it leads to being in the fire...(What happens to Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego?)

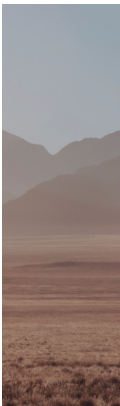


Verses 19–27:

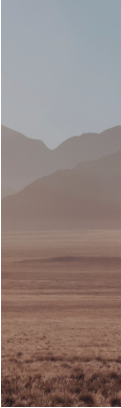
19 Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with fury, and the expression of his face was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He ordered the furnace heated seven times more than it was usually heated. 20 And he ordered some of the mighty men of his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace.



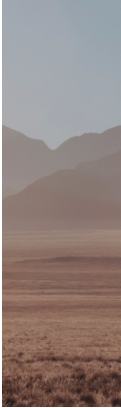
21 Then these men were bound in their cloaks, their tunics, their hats, and their other garments, and they were thrown into the burning fiery furnace. 22 Because the king's order was urgent and the furnace overheated, the flame of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. 23 And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell bound into the burning fiery furnace.



24 Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and rose up in haste. He declared to his counselors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the fire?" They answered and said to the king, "True, O king." 25 He answered and said, "But I see four men unbound, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods." ...



26 Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the door of the burning fiery furnace; he declared, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out, and come here!" Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out from the fire. ...



27 And the satraps, the prefects, the governors, and the king's counselors gathered together and saw that the fire had not had any power over the bodies of those men. The hair of their heads was not singed, their cloaks were not harmed, and no smell of fire had come upon them.



What to know when conviction over compromise leads to being in the fire:

1) "Token, not blueprint" (Davis)



What to know when conviction over compromise leads to being in the fire:

1) "Token, not blueprint" (Davis)

2) God doesn't prevent them from being thrown in the fire, but takes them through the fire.

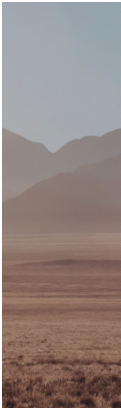


What to know when conviction over compromise leads to being in the fire:

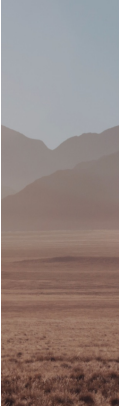
1) "Token, not blueprint" (Davis)

2) God doesn't prevent them from being thrown in the fire, but takes them through the fire.

3) God is with them in the fire.



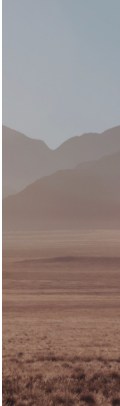
Verse 25: He answered and said, "But I see four men unbound, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods."



Lastly, we close by considering what Nebuchadnezzar says in verses 28-30, but before we read the verses...

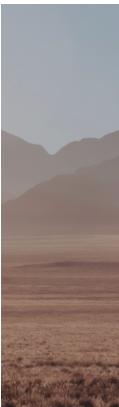
Recall verse 15:

"But if you do not worship, you shall immediately be cast into a burning fiery furnace. **And who is the god who will deliver you out of my hands?"**

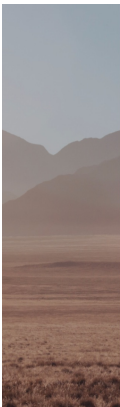


Verses 28-30: 28 Nebuchadnezzar answered and said, **"Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his angel and delivered his servants, who trusted in him, and set aside the king's command, and yielded up their bodies rather than serve and worship any god except their own God.**

...



29 Therefore I make a decree: Any people, nation, or language that speaks anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be torn limb from limb, and their houses laid in ruins, for there is no other god who is able to rescue in this way." 30 Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the province of Babylon.



2 Chronicles 16:9: For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him.



"Today is what the Lord has prepared you for." - Mark Dever



Daniel

LIVING IN EXILE