*CSB – Ignatius Catholic Study Bible - Daniel*

*NJBC – New Jerome Biblical Commentary*

*SN = Special Notes*

*NAB = New American Bible*

*SK = Chinese Bible*

*CCC = Catholic Catechism*

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| **A** | **The Three Young Men Thrown into the Fiery Furnace for Their Refusal to Worship Nebuchadnezzar’s Gold Image**     * The image’s “height was sixty cubits and its breadth six cubits” = 90’ x 9’ * Nebuchadnezzar ordered that all “peoples, nations, and languages” must “fall down and worship the golden image”. This not only represents the conversion in religion but also politics. * The 3 young men were appointed to post in Babylon upon Daniel’s request to the King. * According to the law, Jews are not allowed to worship any sculpted images. Jesus, the Son of God became man, has initiated a new understanding of images. When Christians pay respects to statues of Saints, they do not violet the First Commandment that prohibits the worshipping of false gods/idols. | Daniel 3:1-23  3:1, CSB  3:4-7, CSB  2:49  Ex 20:2-5,  CCC 2112-3, 1159, 2130-32  CSB |
| **B** | **The Prayer of Azariah in the Furnace and the Song of the 3 Young Men**   * 3:24-90 appears in the ancient Greek translations (LXX) of the OT rather than the Hebrew-Aramaic version of the book (MT). The Catholic Church considers the deuterocanonical portions of Daniel to be fully inspired and canonical. It is an integral part of the canon of Scripture. * The prayer of Azariah, or Abednego, is a confession and lament of national sin that acknowledges Israel’s guilt in breaking the covenant. It is similar to the confessions of Ezra and Nehemiah. * “Yet with a contrite heart and a humble spirit may we be accepted, as though it were with burnt offerings of rams and bulls …” (3:39) – reflects Ps 51:19. God is always willing to forgive humanity so that all may be saved; however, we must wholeheartedly repent.   (Ref. <http://elodocuments.blogspot.ca/2016/10/repentance.html>)   * The 3 Young Men’s safety was due to their faithfulness to God; they praise God after the ordeal. The words of praise are similar to Psalm 103; the refrain is similar to Psalm 136; the call to all nations to praise God is similar to Ps 148 (from the high heavens to all creations on earth, followed by the Israelites and the young men themselves). * “But I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire” – according to St. Jerome, the fourth figure is an angel. This foreshadows the Lord Jesus who descended into the furnace of Hades. | 3:24-100  CSB, SK Note  3:26-45, Ezr 9:6-15,  Ne 9:6-37, CSB 3:39  Gen 3:9, Mk 1:15,  CCC 1439, 1451-1453,  CSB  3:51-97, CSB  3:92, CSB  1Peter 3:19 |
| **C** | **Nebuchadnezzar Dwells with the Beasts & Made to Eat Grass**   * “I saw, and behold, a tree in the midst of the earth; and its height was great” – this image represents Babylon. Tree is a commonly used image in the Bible to represent kingdom. The top of the tree “reached to heaven” – represents the pride of the kingdom. The dream warns that Nebuchadnezzar’s pride will be brought low. * Nebuchadnezzar suffered from a mental disorder that not only cost him his throne but also casted him out to the wild living with the beasts. His authority and the glory of his kingdom were restored when he acknowledged the power of God. * 1st Message: Only the messenger from God, the one in whom “the spirit of the holy gods” dwells, that is, Daniel, possesses the wisdom to interpret God’s mystery. * 2nd Message: the God will strike down the proud; those rulers who reject God’s authority. * 3rd Message: “the Most High rules the kingdom of men, and gives it to whom he will”. * 4th Message: “let my counsel be acceptable to you; break off your sins by practicing righteousness, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the oppressed, that there may perhaps be a lengthening of your tranquility” – Good deeds on earth become treasures in heaven. * 5th Message: God punishes people only to lead them towards holiness. His punishment on Nebuchadnezzar has bore fruit; earning him humility and acceptance of God’s highest power. | 3:97-4:34  4:10,  Ezk 17:22-24, 31:1-18  Mt 13:31-32, Gen 11:4,  4:1-34, CSB  4:18, SK Note 4  CSB 4:10-18  4:14 (4:17) SK Note 4  4:24, Mt 6:19-20, 19:21  CCC 1434, 2447  CSB 4:32-37 |