

The present state of society and the world reveal that a momentous crisis is looming on the horizon. The religious, political, social, economic, and environmental climate forecast the grim approach of disaster and danger. People sense that the normal flow of life on planet earth is somehow destined to change. While it is true that many suggest that earth's unsettling state of affairs will progressively improve, the Bible predicts otherwise. In the future, religious and political powers will unite in an effort to improve conditions on earth not realizing that this "unholy union" will plunge the world into a global religious crisis that will try the souls of God's people to the very core! What factors lead to this coming crisis? How are Christians to prepare? What responsibility do we bare in alerting others of what's looming on the horizon? Let's study and discover What God Says About..."The Coming Crisis."

BACK TO THE FUTURE

Note: *The book of Daniel reveals the central issues and conflict that God's people will face in "The Coming Crisis." The tests over obedience and false worship to which Daniel and the three Hebrew boys experienced provide a clear picture of the future crisis. The book of Revelation provides further details regarding the nature, severity, and extent of "The Coming Crisis."*

THE GOLDEN IMAGE

1. **In defiance of God, what did King Nebuchadnezzar have made and set up in Babylon?**

   "Nebuchadnezzar the king made _____ _____ _____ _____, 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." *Daniel 3:1*

   Note: *In defiance against God, King Nebuchadnezzar erected an imposing golden image in the plain of Dura that stood about ninety feet tall and nine feet wide. The prideful king determined that the kingdom of Babylon would rule the world forever.*

2. For what purpose did King Nebuchadnezzar gather all his officials together?

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

3. What did the Babylonian officials do when they arrived at the dedication service of the golden image?

"Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they _____ _____ _____ _____ that Nebuchadnezzar had set up." *Daniel 3:3*

BOW OR BURN

4. What did the herald command the people to do when they heard the music play?

4"Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, 5That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up." *Daniel 3:4, 5*

5. What would be the consequence of all who refused to bow to the golden image when the music began to play?

"And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be _____ _____ _____ _____ of a _____ _____ _____." *Daniel 3:6*

Note: *The leaders in the Babylonian realm were faced with one of two options—bow and worship the golden image or burn in the fiery furnace! No one was exempt. While bowing to the image posed no problem for the idolatrous leaders in Babylon, God's people knew that to do so would be a direct violation of God's commandments (Exodus 20:3-6). The three Hebrew boys would rather burn in the fiery furnace than disobey God.*

6. **Who accused the Jews or three Hebrew boys for not bowing to the golden image?**

"Wherefore at that time _____ _____ came near, and accused the Jews." *Daniel 3:8*

Note: *Just as the three Hebrew Boys' refusal to bow arrested the attention of the Chaldeans, the king and eventually all those gathered at the dedication of the image, the faith of God's commandment-keeping people will be brought into clear focus in the future. God's people will face scrutiny as they stand out in the crowd. Just as the obedience and deliverance of the three Hebrew boys brought a definite knowledge of the true and living God to the inhabitants of Babylon, the whole earth will gain a distinct and clear knowledge of the true God as He works on behalf of His people in "The Coming Crisis."*

7. **What three things did the Chaldeans tell King Nebuchadnezzar regarding Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego?**

"There are certain Jews whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; _____ _____, O king, _____ _____ _____ _____: they _____ _____ _____ _____, nor _____ _____ _____ _____ which thou hast set up." *Daniel 3:12*

8. **What was Nebuchadnezzar's reaction to the "disturbing news" he received from the Chaldeans?**

"Then Nebuchadnezzar in his _____ _____ _____ commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Then they brought these men before the king." *Daniel 3:13*

9. **What did Nebuchadnezzar want to know firsthand from Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego?**

"Nebuchadnezzar spoke and said unto them, _____ _____ _____, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____, nor _____ _____ _____ _____ which I have set up?" *Daniel 3:14*

10. **Under what condition would Nebuchadnezzar spare the lives of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego?**

"Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of music, _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ which I have made; well: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?" *Daniel 3:15*

11. What did the three Hebrew boys courageously and without hesitation tell Nebuchadnezzar they would not do?

[16]"Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. [17]If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. [18]But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____, nor _____ _____ _____ _____ which thou hast set up." *Daniel 3:16-18*

FALSE WORSHIP ENFORCED

12. What furious commands were given by the king when the three Hebrew boys refused to worship the golden image?

[19]"Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: therefore he spake, and commanded that they should _____ _____ _____ one _____ _____ _____ than it was wont to be heated. [20]And he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to _____ Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____." *Daniel 3:19, 20*

13. How is Nebuchadnezzar's command described? Which three men were cast into the midst of the fiery furnace?

[22]"Therefore because the king's commandment was _____, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. [23]And these three men, _____, _____, and _____, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace." *Daniel 3:22, 23*

14. To Nebuchadnezzar's astonishment, how many men did he see in the fiery furnace? Who was the fourth man?

[24]"Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonied, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. [25]He answered and said, Lo, I see _____ _____ loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like _____ _____ ____ _____." *Daniel 3:24, 25*

Note: *When we stand for Jesus, He will stand with us! Just as God protected the three Hebrew boys from burning in the furnace, He will protect and preserve His people in "The Coming Crisis."*

DANIEL – TRUE WORSHIP PROHIBITED

Note: *The three Hebrew boys were confronted with the issue of enforced false worship. Daniel was confronted with the issue of true worship prohibited. God's people will face both issues in "The Coming Crisis."*

15. When King Darius organized his kingdom which administrator did he put in charge?

[1]"It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom an hundred and twenty princes, which should be over the whole kingdom; [2]And over these three presidents; of whom _____ was first: that the princes might give accounts unto them, and the king should have no damage." *Daniel 6:1, 2*

16. Why was Daniel preferred above the other top officials?

"Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an _____ _____ was _____ _____; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm." *Daniel 6:3*

17. Why was it impossible for the envious presidents and princes to find any fault with Daniel?

"Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as _____ was _____, neither was there _____ _____ or _____ _____ in him." *Daniel 6:4*

18. What was the only charge the envious presidents and princes could find against Daniel?

"Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning _____ _____ _____ _____ _____." *Daniel 6:5*

A DECREE FORMULATED

Note: *The presidents and princes were determined to get rid of Daniel and they would stoop to any level to accomplish their devilish designs. They conspired together, prepared a restrictive decree and presented it to the king to be signed and enforced into law. God's people will also be confronted with a similarly enforced restrictive law that is designed to result in their extermination in "The Coming Crisis."*

19. Intent on Daniel's demise, what decree did the presidents and princes want the king to implement? What was the religious nature of the decree?

[6]"Then these presidents and princes assembled together to the king, and said thus unto him, King Darius, live for ever. [7]All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counsellors, and the captains, have consulted together to _____ _____ _____ _____, and to _____ _____ _____ _____, that _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions." *Daniel 6:6, 7*

20. What did the presidents and princes urge King Darius to do with the decree they presented before him?

"Now, O king, _____ _____ _____, and _____ _____ _____, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not." *Daniel 6:8*

21. What did King Darius do with the writing and decree that the deceptive presidents and princes placed before him?

"Wherefore king Darius _____ _____ _____ and _____ _____." *Daniel 6:9*

LAW FORBIDDING TRUE WORSHIP

22. What open religious act of worship did Daniel continue to do even though it was now forbidden by the government?

"Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he _____ _____ _____ _____ three times a day, and _____, and gave thanks _____ _____ _____, as he did aforetime." *Daniel 6:10*

23. What did the cunning men ask the king when they saw Daniel praying in his window chamber? What was the king's answer?

[11]"Then these men assembled, and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God. [12]Then they came near, and spake before the king concerning the king's decree; _____ _____ _____ _____ ___ _____, that every man that shall ask a petition of any God or man within thirty days, save of thee,

O king, shall be cast into the den of lions? The king answered and said, _____ _____ ____ _____, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not." *Daniel 6:11, 12*

24. How did the wicked men frame their charges against Daniel?

[13]"Then answered they and said before the king, _____ _____, which is of the children of the captivity of Judah, _____ _____ _____, O king, _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____, but maketh his petition three times a day. [14]Then the king, when he heard these words, was sore displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him: and he laboured till the going down of the sun to deliver him." *Daniel 6:13, 14*

25. What did the wicked men remind the king regarding the decree that he signed? What did king Darius reluctantly command to happen to Daniel?

[15]"Then these men assembled unto the king, and said unto the king, Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, That _____ _____ _____ _____ which the king establisheth _____ _____ _____. [16]Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee." *Daniel 6:15, 16*

26. What did God send his angel to do on behalf of Daniel?

[21]"Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever. [22]My God hath sent his angel, and hath _____ _____ _____ _____, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt." *Daniel 6:21, 22*

Note: *God preserved Daniel's life when he would not deny or hide his faith in Medo-Persia. God will do the same for those who refuse to deny or hide their relationship with Him even when the threat of death is imminent! God's people will continue to serve and worship Him in "The Coming Crisis."*

REVELATION AND THE COMING CRISIS

Note: *The book of Revelation provides the details of the soon coming crisis. The issues revealed and experienced in Daniel will similarly confront God's people in the final conflict. Just as God preserved the faithful in the Book of Daniel, He will do the same for the faithful in "The Coming Crisis."*

27. What does the lamb-like beast force the whole world to do?

[11]"And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. [12]And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to _____ _____ _____ _____ whose deadly wound was healed." *Revelation 13:11, 12*

Note: *Scholars across the religious spectrum generally identify the lamb-like beast as the United States of America. This great nation of religious liberty rose in 1776 A.D. around the same time that the first beast, the papacy of the Dark Ages, went into captivity in 1798 A.D. The prophetic role of the lamb-like beast is to undergo a striking change and form an image of the papacy—a union of church and state, and enforce false religious worship with the penalty of death!*

28. What does this second beast say to the inhabitants of earth?

"And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____, which had the wound by a sword, and did live." *Revelation 13:14*

29. What is the penalty for refusing to worship the image of the beast?

"And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast _____ _____ _____." *Revelation 13:15*

SUMMARY

The faith of God's people will take center stage in the soon coming crisis. False religious worship and a prohibition against true worship will bring the faith of God's people into full view. Commandment-keepers' refusal to bow to the religious law of the land by their worship of the true God and their conscientious observance of His commandments, will be viewed as treason against the government. Religious liberty will eventually be revoked and a death decree will be strictly enforced. But, just as God intervened, delivered and rewarded the faith of Daniel and the three Hebrew boys, He will do the same for His people in "The Coming Crisis."

30. Dear friend, are you willing to obey God rather than man regardless of the consequences? _____

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