



THE BOOK OF

**DANIEL**




A close-up photograph of tree bark, showing a rough, cracked, and layered texture. The bark is dark brown to black, with deep crevices and ridges. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the intricate patterns of the bark's surface. The background is blurred, showing more of the tree trunk and some green foliage.

# **Systematic Theology**

**topical** studies of  
what the whole Bible  
says about a given subject



A close-up photograph of a tree trunk. The bark is dark, rough, and textured. A large, irregular hole has been made in the bark, revealing the reddish-brown inner wood. The hole is roughly rectangular with jagged edges. The background is blurred, showing other trees and foliage in a forest setting.

Sometimes you can't see the forest for the trees.



An aerial photograph of a dense forest. The forest is composed of many tall, thin trees with green foliage. In the lower right corner, a river flows through the forest, and a sandy beach is visible. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

## **Biblical Theology**

**Looks at the overall history of redemption.  
Focuses on the series of events  
that constitute our redemption.**





God is said to be  
the builder of everything  
(Hebrews 3.4).



# **The Three Great Rebellions:**

**1) The Fall** (Genesis 3)

**2) The Flood** (Genesis 6)

**3) The Invasion Attempt** (Genesis 11)

**What is God to do?**





THE  
**A** - TEAM











3 0 T H A N N I V E R S A R Y

A ROB REINER FILM

# THE PRINCESS BRIDE





















## **Genesis 12.5**

**“Look toward heaven, and number the stars,  
if you are able to number them.”**

**Then he said to him,**

**“So shall your offspring be.”**













## BY 605 BC, THIS RESCUE EFFORT SEEMS IN SHAMBLES

So, in 605 b.c. Jeremiah prophesied that Israel would be taken captive in Babylon for 70 years and that Jerusalem and its temple would be destroyed.





**DANIEL 1:1 says,**

1 In the third year of the reign of King Jehoiakim of Judah, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon advanced against Jerusalem and laid it under siege.

2 Now **the Lord delivered King Jehoiakim of Judah into his power**, along with some of the vessels of the temple of God. He brought them to the land of Babylonia to the temple of his god and put the vessels in the treasury of his god.



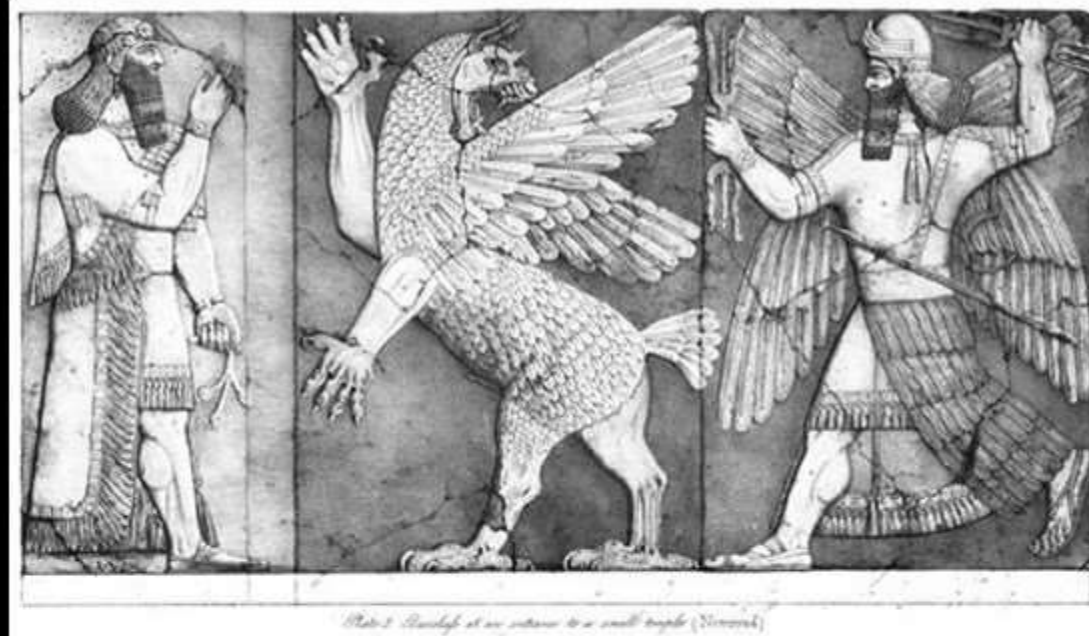


## BABYLON'S STOMACH-TURNING "VICTORY" :

Nebuchadnezzar a polytheist

Hebrew text has אלהים

- Judg 11:24 (of the Moabite god Chemosh);
- 1 Sam 5:7 (of the Philistine god Dagon);
- 1 Kgs 11:33 (of the Canaanite goddess Astarte, the Moabite god Chemosh, and the Ammonite god Milcom)
- 2 Kgs 19:37 (of the Assyrian god Nisroch).





# NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S gods

- Since gods normally had their own individual temples, Dan 1:2 probably refers to a particular deity, perhaps Marduk, the supreme god of Babylon, or Marduk's son Nabu, **after whom Nebuchadnezzar was named.**
- Nebuchadnezzar means **“Nabu has protected the son who will inherit”**
- see HALOT 660 s.v. **נְבוּכַדְרֶאֱצַר**

**Has Nabu defeated Israel's God?**







THE BOOK OF

DANIEL

**EXCITING BUT PUZZLING**





THE BOOK OF

DANIEL

PUZZLING



# Sections of Hebrew Bible (OT) : TANACH

1) Torah – Law – תּוֹרָה

2) Nevi'im – Prophets – נְבִיאִים

3) Kethuvim – Writings – כְּתוּבִים , a.k.a. Hagiographia





## CHS. 1 – 6

a set of six court tales

written mostly in *Aramaic* (2:4b – 7:28)

(NARRATIVE)

## CHS. 7 – 12

four apocalyptic visions

written mostly in *Hebrew*

(APOCALYPTIC/PROPHETIC)







THE BOOK OF

# DANIEL

COMBINES NARRATIVE OF HISTORY WITH ESCHATOLOGY  
BOTH COSMIC IN SCOPE AND POLITICAL IN FOCUS

**JUST AS YAHWEH SAVES DANIEL,**

**SO WILL HE SAVE ALL ISRAEL IN THEIR PRESENT OPRESSION.**

**EXCITING**




A scroll is unrolled on a dark surface, showing a map of the Babylonian Empire. The map is drawn on aged, yellowish parchment and features a red-shaded region in the Middle East. To the right of the map stands a muscular, silver-colored statue of a man wearing a tall, tiered crown and a brown skirt. The scroll is held open by two wooden rollers. The text 'BABYLONIAN EMPIRE' is written in a serif font at the top of the map.

## BABYLONIAN EMPIRE

**CH.1, CONQUERING AND ASSIMILATION**

**CH.2, STATUE VISION**



The identity of the first kingdom is clearly Babylon. The identification of the following three kingdoms is disputed.

Most conservative scholars identify them as Media-Persia, Greece, and Rome.

***The fifth Kingdom is an eternal one.***







## DANIEL 1:6,

6 As it turned out, among these young men were some from Judah: **Daniel** [EL is my Judge], **Hananiah** [Yah is Gracious], **Mishael** [Who is Like El?], and **Azariah** [Yah has helped].

7 But the overseer of the court officials renamed them. He gave Daniel the name **Belteshazzar**, Hananiah he named **Shadrach**, Mishael he named **Meshach**, and Azariah he named **Abednego**.

- Meanings of Babylonian names more conjectural
- Belteshazzar means “Belti, protect the king” (cf. Dan 4:8)
- Shadrach means “command of Aku”
- Meshach uncertain
- Abednego means “servant of Nego”







THE BOOK OF

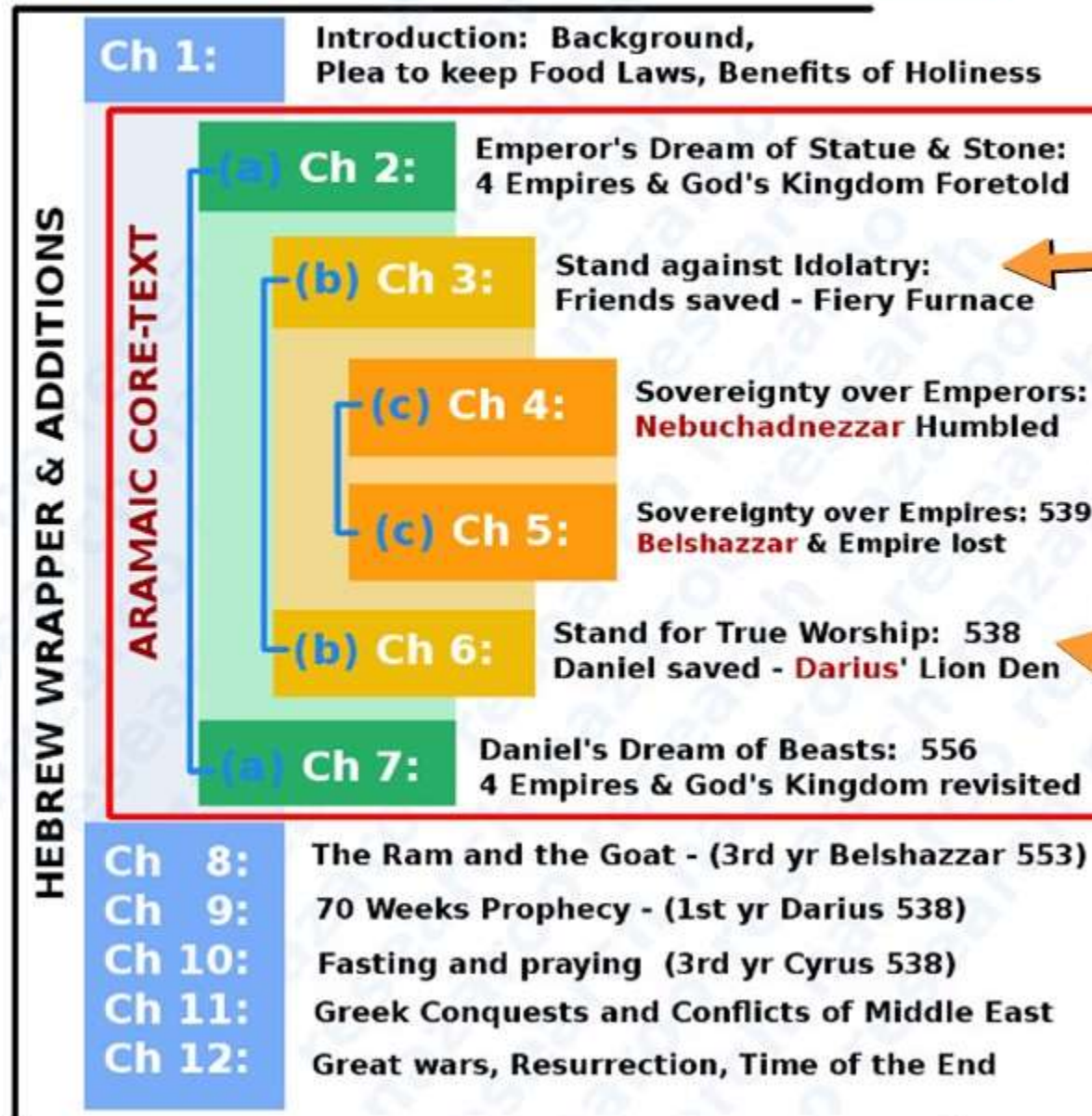
# DANIEL

**YAHWEH'S SUPERIOR POWER  
AND THE FAITHFULNESS OF HIS SERVANTS**

**CH. 3**



# Daniel's Basic Structure





# MAIN IDEA OF CH.3

THIS CHAPTER IS NOT CONCERNED PRIMARYLY TO ELEVATE SHADRACH, MESHACH, AND ABEDNEGO AS A MODEL OF FAITHFULNESS.

*(ALTHOUGH THEY CERTAINLY ARE)*

**ITS PRIMARY CONCERN IS TO  
SHOWCASE THE SUPERIORITY  
OF YAHWEH.**

**Has Nabu defeated Israel's God?**





Daniel 3:1

¶ King Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold, whose height was sixty cubits **[90 feet tall and 9 feet wide]** and its breadth six cubits. He set it up on the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.

*[Assuming a length of 18 inches for the standard cubit]*

**MORE LIKE AN OBELISK, UNLESS BASE INCLUDED IN THE MEASURE  
THE COLOSSUS OF RHODES AT HELIOS (ca. 280-224 b.c.) STOOD 70 cubits (105 ft)**







3:2 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.**”



3:6 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.**





A parchment map of the Babylonian Empire is shown, with the text "BABYLONIAN EMPIRE" written in the upper right. The map depicts the region of Mesopotamia, with a red area highlighting the empire's territory. A man in a blue tunic and a tall, ornate crown stands to the right of the map, looking at it. A compass rose is visible in the lower left corner of the map.

BABYLONIAN  
EMPIRE

CH.3 IS ABOUT **IDOLATRY AND HOW THESE CAPTIVES WILL RESPOND TO THE PRESSURE TO WORSHIP A god OTHER THAN THEIR OWN.**

NEBUCHADNEZZAR MAKES A DISPLAY OF POWER.

CH.3 IS ABOUT YAHWEH'S SUPERIOR POWER, **SO WE NEED TO SEE THE KING HE IS BEING SUPERIOR OVER.**



# NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DISPLAY OF POWER

1. **CREATES AN IMAGE OF GOLD (EXODUS 20.3-4).**  
*REMEMBER THE DREAM OF THE STATUE IN CH.2 – HE WAS TOLD HE WAS THE HEAD OF GOLD.*
2. **THIS STATUE IS MEANT TO BE EVEN BETTER THAN THE ONE FROM THE DREAM (HEAD OF GOLD v. WHOLE)**
3. **EVERYONE MUST BOW BEFORE ITS LIKENESS (HIMSELF OF NABU?). IDOLATRY**
4. **HE SUMMONS EVEN THE BIGWIGS OF SOCIETY (v.2).**
5. **REPETITION OF THE TEXT BUILDS UP (AND MOCKS).**
6. **HE EXERCISES POWER OVER ALL BY DECREEEING HOW THEY MUST RESPOND.**







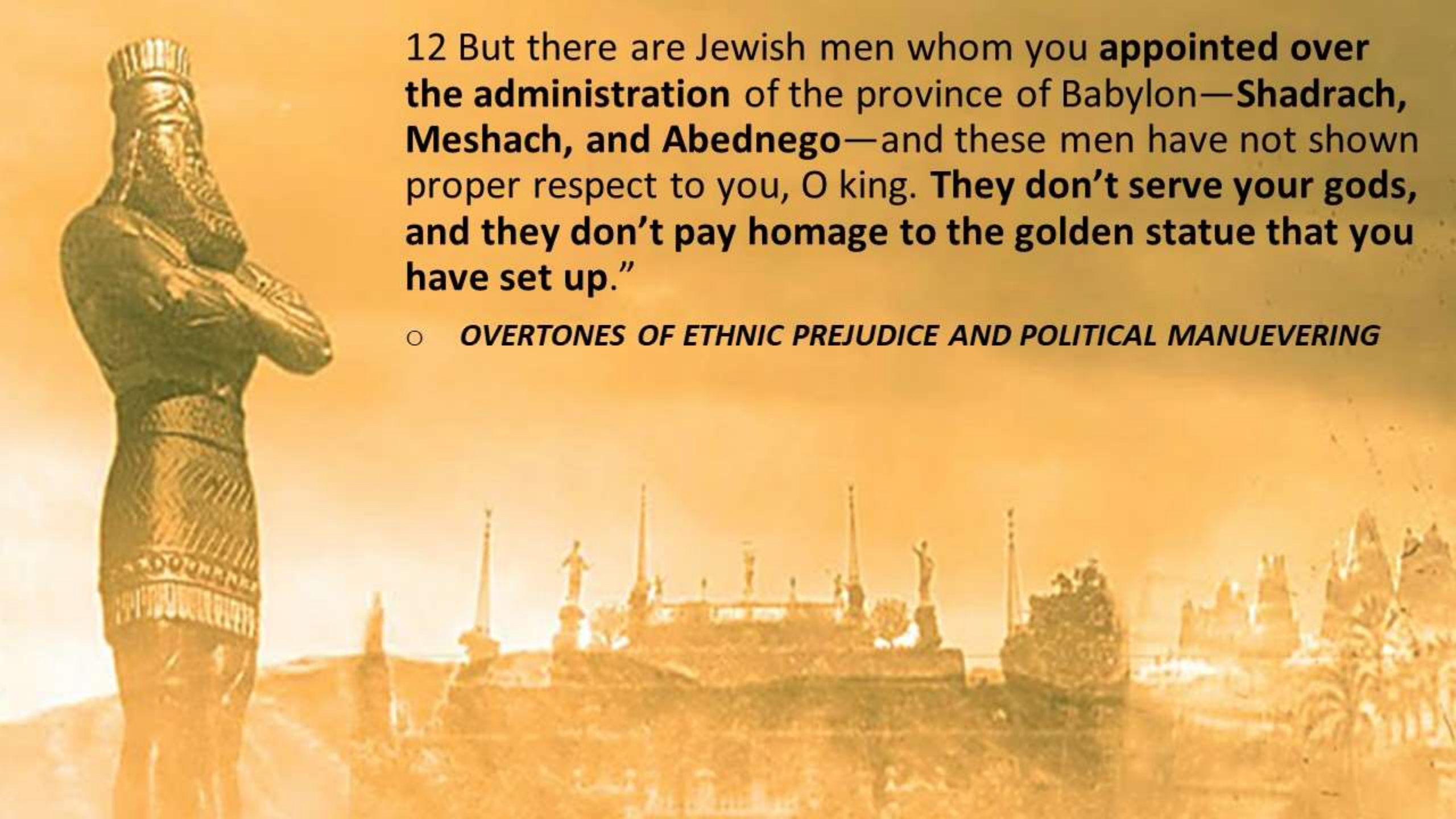
8 Now at that time **certain Chaldeans** came forward and **brought malicious accusations against the Jews.**

9 They said to King Nebuchadnezzar, “O king, live forever!

10 You have issued an edict, O king, that everyone must bow down and pay homage to the golden statue when they hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, trigon, harp, pipes, and all kinds of music.

11 **And whoever does not bow down and pay homage must be thrown into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire.**





12 But there are Jewish men whom you **appointed over the administration** of the province of Babylon—**Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego**—and these men have not shown proper respect to you, O king. **They don't serve your gods, and they don't pay homage to the golden statue that you have set up."**

- *OVERTONES OF ETHNIC PREJUDICE AND POLITICAL MANUEVERING*





WHEN WE GET TO CH.6

(ARAMAIC CHIASTIC PARALLEL)

WE WILL SEE THAT **DANIEL'S COLLEAGUES HAVE SET HIM UP WITH SOMETHING HE CANNOT HELP BUT DISOBEY.**



# THESE CHALDEANS ARE OPPORTUNISTS

- *HOW DID THEY KNOW?*











**8 Now at that time certain Chaldeans came forward and brought malicious accusations against the Jews.**

- **TECHNICALLY, THE KING DID CREATE A LAW ON PENALTY OF DEATH**
- **SO EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE 'MALICIOUS' THEY ARE STILL CORRECT**







## DANIEL 3:13-18,

13 Then Nebuchadnezzar in a fit of rage demanded that they bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego before him. So they brought them before the king. 14 Nebuchadnezzar said to them, “Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you don’t serve my gods and that you don’t pay homage to the golden statue that I set up? 15 Now if you are ready, when you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, trigon, harp, pipes, and all kinds of music, you must bow down and pay homage to the statue that I had made. If you don’t pay homage to it, you will immediately be thrown into the midst of the furnace of blazing fire.





## DANIEL 3:13-18,

**15b Now, who is that god who can rescue you from my power?”**

16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego replied to King Nebuchadnezzar, “We do not need to give you a reply concerning this.

17 If our God whom we are serving exists (cf.v.15)

meaning and syntax of אֵיתִי

- ❑ Participle later in the verse יָכֹל yakhil, “able” form a periphrastic construction
- ❑ Other interpreters take the first part of v. 17 to mean “If it is so, then our God will deliver us” (cf. KJV, ASV, RSV, NASB). BUT MEANING OF אֵיתִי IS EXIST.





## DANIEL 3:13-18,

17 If our God whom we are serving exists

**[MEANING, 'WE THINK HE DOES!']**

**he is able to rescue us** from the furnace of blazing fire, and he will rescue us, O king, from your power as well.

18 **But if he does not**, let it be known to you, O king, that **we don't serve your gods, and we will not pay homage to the golden statue that you have set up.**"

WHAT A CONTRAST TO POPULAR ATTITUDE.

THERE ARE SO MANY VARIABLES WE DO NOT KNOW.





“God is great,  
God is good.  
Let us thank him  
for our food.”





“God is **great**,  
God is **good**.  
Let us thank him  
for our food.”





# “Why does God allow it?”

## PHILOSOPHICAL LEVEL:

### “Why does God allow bad things to happen?”

- Most people in the last 30 years have admitted that God’s purposes could be greater than we understand.
- If there is a God, he might have, *and probably does have*, a good and complex set of reasons why.
- Just because we can’t think of the reason does not mean it is not there.





A man with a beard, wearing a dark t-shirt and blue jeans, is sitting on a brown leather sofa. He is looking upwards and to the right, with his right hand resting against his face in a contemplative or distressed pose. The background is a dark, textured wall.

**“Why does God allow it?”**

**PERSONAL LEVEL:**

**“Why did this happen to me?”**

- Go to the cross.
- This is the only faith where God suffers for you.
- “I COULD NEVER BELIEVE IF IT WERE NOT FOR THE CROSS”



# THE HEART OF THE CHAPTER

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S CHALLENGE IS REALLY  
A CHALLENGE TO YAHWEH

WHO IS A GOD AND WHO IS THE GOD?

“WHO CAN DELIVER YOU FROM MY HAND?”

*(Who does Nebuchadnezzar really worship?)*





A painting depicting a scene from 'The King's Fury'. The scene is set in a grand, ornate interior with a high ceiling and large windows. A central figure, a woman in a vibrant red dress, stands amidst a crowd of people. The crowd is diverse in age and appearance, with some individuals looking towards the center. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and deep shadows, creating a sense of tension and drama. The overall style is reminiscent of 19th-century realism.

# THE KING'S FURY

*THEY ARE, AFTER ALL, HIS OFFICERS.*

HE OFFERS A SECOND CHANCE:

- HE OFFERS A SECOND CHANCE
- DID YOU MISS IT?
- LET'S START THE MUSIC OVER

IT'S THE ONLY TIME THEY SPEAK,  
AND IT IS SEEMINGLY IN UNISON.

THEY REPRESENT THE FAITHFUL.





## WHERE IS DANIEL?

- Daniel was “ruler over the entire province of Babylon and . . . in charge of all its wise men” (Daniel 2:48). **AWAY ON ASSIGNMENT?**
- Because of his place in the royal court (Daniel 2:49), **EXEMPT?**
- He had “purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself” (Daniel 1:8) **SO HE DID NOT GIVE IN.**

The most likely scenario is that  
**Daniel was away on the king’s business.**





## ANSWER:

Cook, John A., *Grammar and Theology in Daniel 3:16-18*, *Bulletin for Biblical Research*, 28 no 3 2018, p 367-380.

***“Whether or not our God is able is not the issue King. He might deliver us, He might not. But we're not going to bow down”***



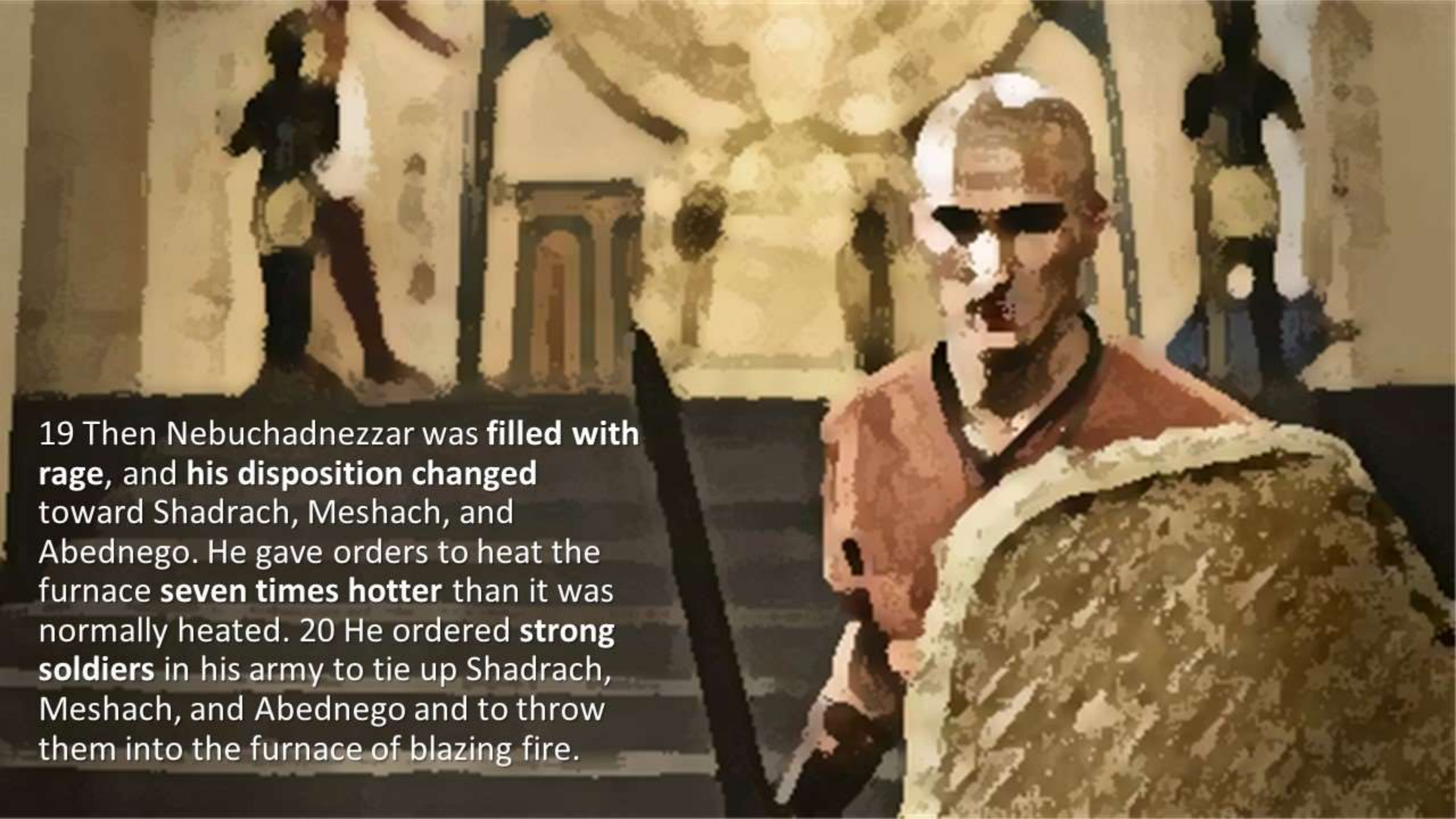
# THE KING'S 'POWER'

NEBUCHADNEZZAR IS ALREADY SHOWN  
TO BE POWER-LESS.

HE COULD NOT EVEN GET THESE THREE TO BOW.





A man with a shaved head and a dark beard, wearing a red tunic and a heavy, fur-lined cloak, stands in a grand, arched interior. He is looking slightly to the right. In the background, two other figures are visible, one on the left and one on the right, both in similar attire. The architecture features large arches and columns, suggesting a palace or a temple. The lighting is warm and dramatic, highlighting the man's face and the texture of his cloak.

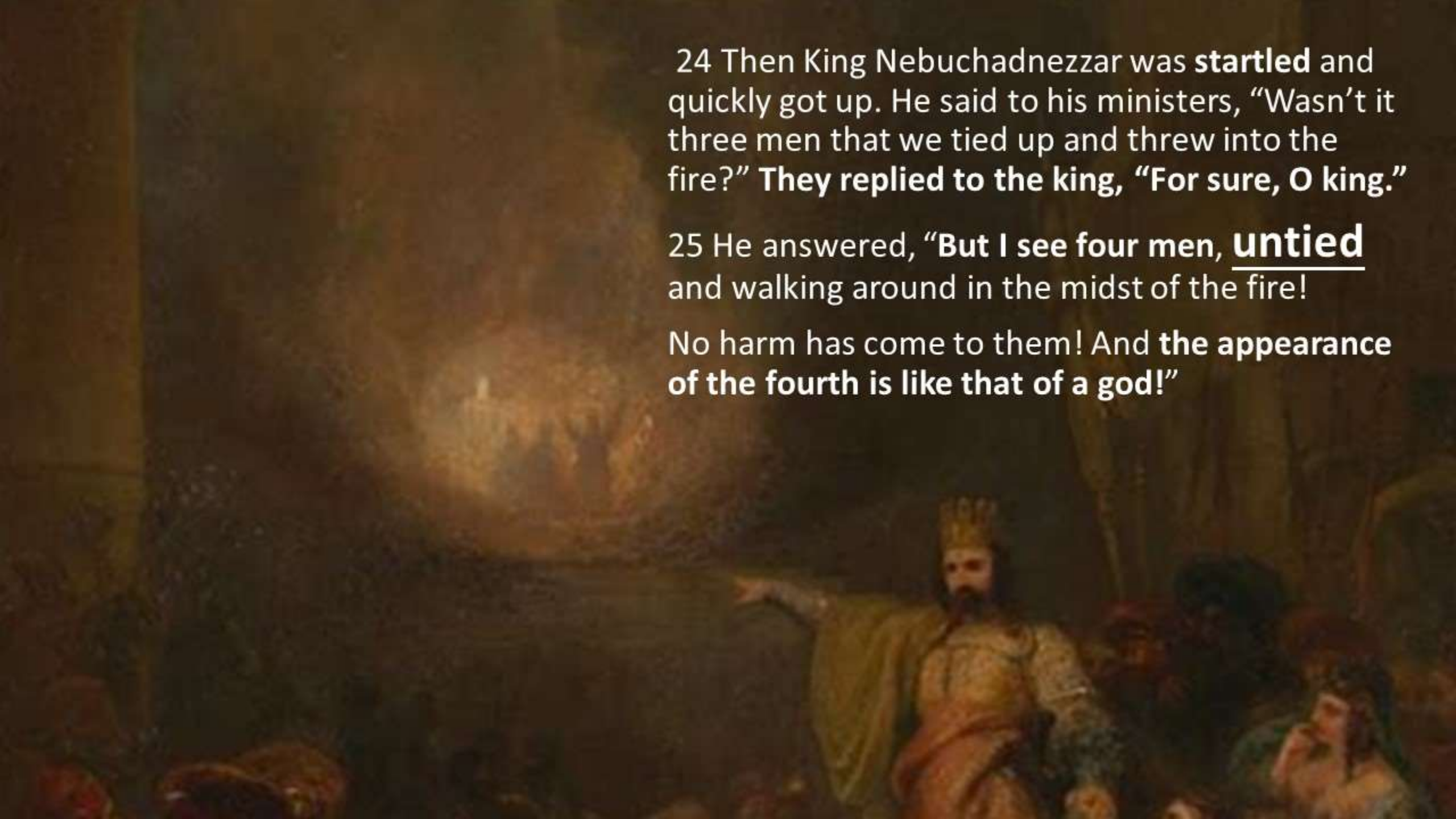
19 Then Nebuchadnezzar was **filled with rage**, and **his disposition changed** toward Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He gave orders to heat the furnace **seven times hotter** than it was normally heated. 20 He ordered **strong soldiers** in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and to throw them into the furnace of blazing fire.



21 So those men **were tied up** while still wearing their cloaks, trousers, turbans, and other clothes, and were thrown into the furnace of blazing fire. 22 But since the king's command was so urgent, and the furnace was so excessively hot, the men who escorted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego **were killed by the leaping flames**. 23 But those three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, **fell into the furnace** of blazing fire while still **securely bound**.







24 Then King Nebuchadnezzar was **startled** and quickly got up. He said to his ministers, “Wasn’t it three men that we tied up and threw into the fire?” **They replied to the king, “For sure, O king.”**

25 He answered, “**But I see four men, untied** and walking around in the midst of the fire!

No harm has come to them! And **the appearance of the fourth is like that of a god!**”





A BIG DEAL WAS MADE **ABOUT THEIR CLOTHES** IN v21.

A BIG DEAL WAS ALSO MADE **ABOUT THEM BEING TIED UP** IN v.21 AND v.23.

AND IT IS THEN STATED THEY ARE **UNTIED** v.25.



לְבַר-אֱלֹהִים:

בַּר

bar (Aramaic)

אֱלֹהֵ

'ēlāh (Aramaic)

Lit. in Aramaic, “like that of a son of the gods.”

He alone has the appearance of a god  
(Ezek.1.27-28).

We are not even told of the three *see him*.





## DANIEL 3:26 ff

26 Then Nebuchadnezzar approached the door of the furnace of blazing fire. He called out, “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the most high God, come out! Come here!”

Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego emerged from the fire. 27 Once the satraps, prefects, governors, and ministers of the king had gathered around, **they saw that those men were physically unharmed by the fire.** The hair of their heads was not singed, nor were their trousers damaged. **Not even the smell of fire was to be found on them!**





## DANIEL 3:26 ff

28 Nebuchadnezzar exclaimed, “Praised be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent forth his angel and has rescued his servants who trusted in him, ignoring the edict of the king and giving up their bodies rather than serve or pay homage to any god other than their God!

29 I hereby decree that any people, nation, or language group that blasphemes the God of Shadrach, Meshach, or Abednego will be dismembered and his home reduced to rubble!

For there exists no other god who can deliver in this way.”

30 Then Nebuchadnezzar promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the province of Babylon.





**NABU**  
(NEBUCHADNEZZAR)  
VS.  
**YAHWEH**

**WHO WINS? (v.29)**

**“For there exists no other god who can deliver in this way.”**

**NEBUCHADNEZZAR ADDS YAHWEH TO THE PANTHEON.**

**NEBUCHADNEZZAR LOOKS FOOLISH. A CARICATURE OF ‘POWER.’**





v.15

“WHO CAN DELIVER YOU FROM MY HAND?”

Answer? (v.29)





A painting depicting a scene with a large fire in the background and a king in the foreground. The king is seated on a throne, wearing a crown and a patterned robe, with his right arm extended towards the fire. Other figures are visible in the foreground, some appearing to be in a state of distress or contemplation. The overall atmosphere is dramatic and somber.

**WHO IS THIS FOURTH PERSON IN THE FIRE?**

מלאך יהוה

**Is this appearance necessary?**

**The appearance shows whose power?**

**For whose benefit is it?**



A painting depicting a king with a beard and a crown, wearing a green and gold robe, pointing his right arm towards a large, bright, glowing orb in the center of a dark, cavernous space. The orb has a textured, crystalline appearance. To the right, a woman in a blue and green dress is seated, looking towards the king. The background is dark and textured, suggesting a cave or a large, dimly lit room.

**HOW DO WE GET WHAT THEY HAD?**  
**(MAYBE YOU ALREADY HAVE IT)**

1 Peter 1:6

In this [YOUR SALVATION] you rejoice, **though now for a little while**, if necessary, **you have been grieved by various trials**,

(7) so that **the tested genuineness of your faith**—more precious than gold that perishes **though it is tested by fire**—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.







**Revelation 1.15**

**His feet were like fine  
brass, as if refined in a  
furnace, and His voice as  
the sound of many waters**



**The promise is not that you  
will not go through fire.**

The promise is when you do, God says,

**“I will so care about you, so love you,  
that you will be able to know my  
presence is with you;  
that I am walking with you.”**

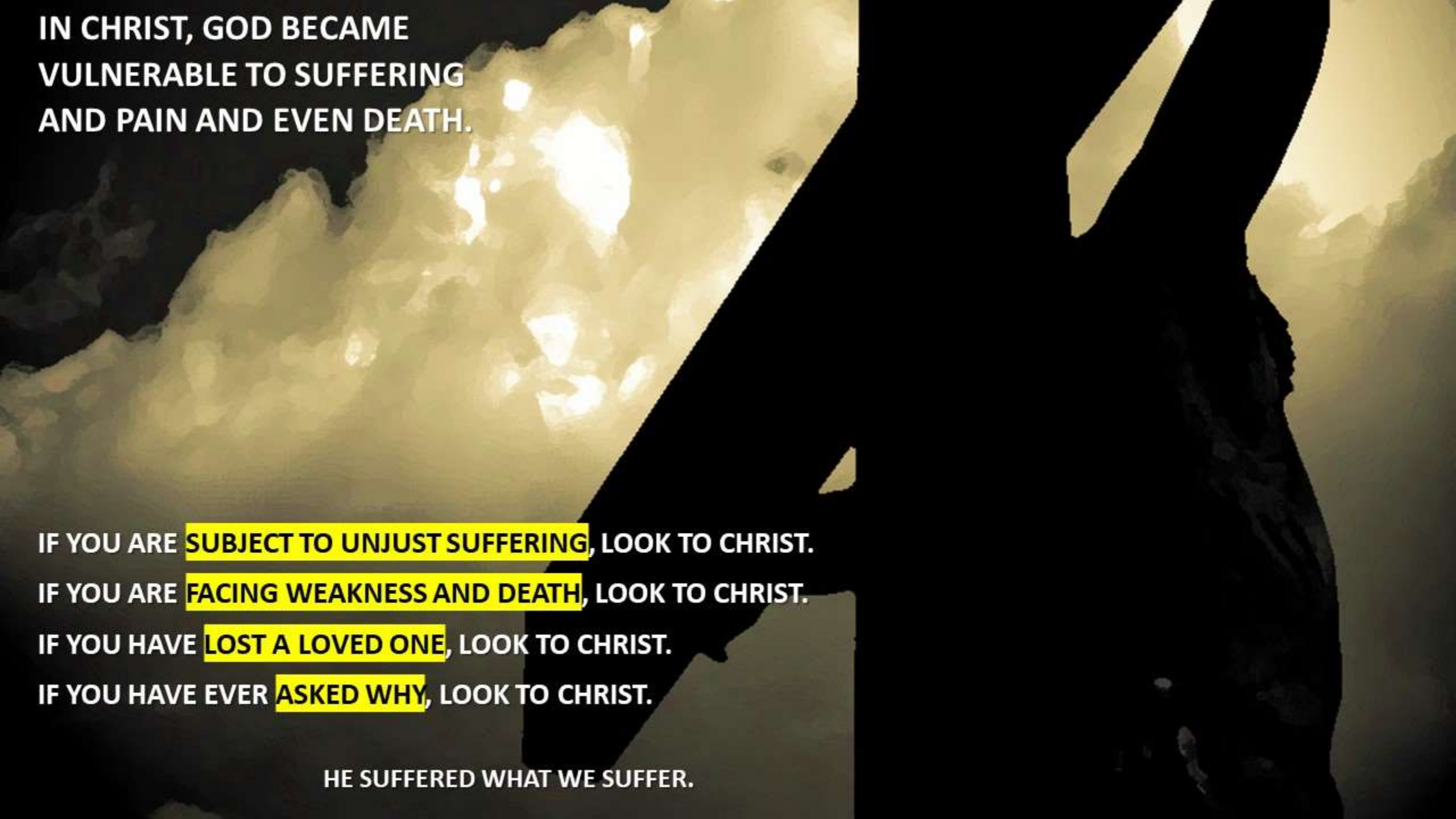
**You will not be consumed.**



(10) ¶ Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully,

(11) inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he **predicted the sufferings of Christ** and the subsequent glories.





**IN CHRIST, GOD BECAME  
VULNERABLE TO SUFFERING  
AND PAIN AND EVEN DEATH.**

**IF YOU ARE **SUBJECT TO UNJUST SUFFERING**, LOOK TO CHRIST.**

**IF YOU ARE **FACING WEAKNESS AND DEATH**, LOOK TO CHRIST.**

**IF YOU HAVE **LOST A LOVED ONE**, LOOK TO CHRIST.**

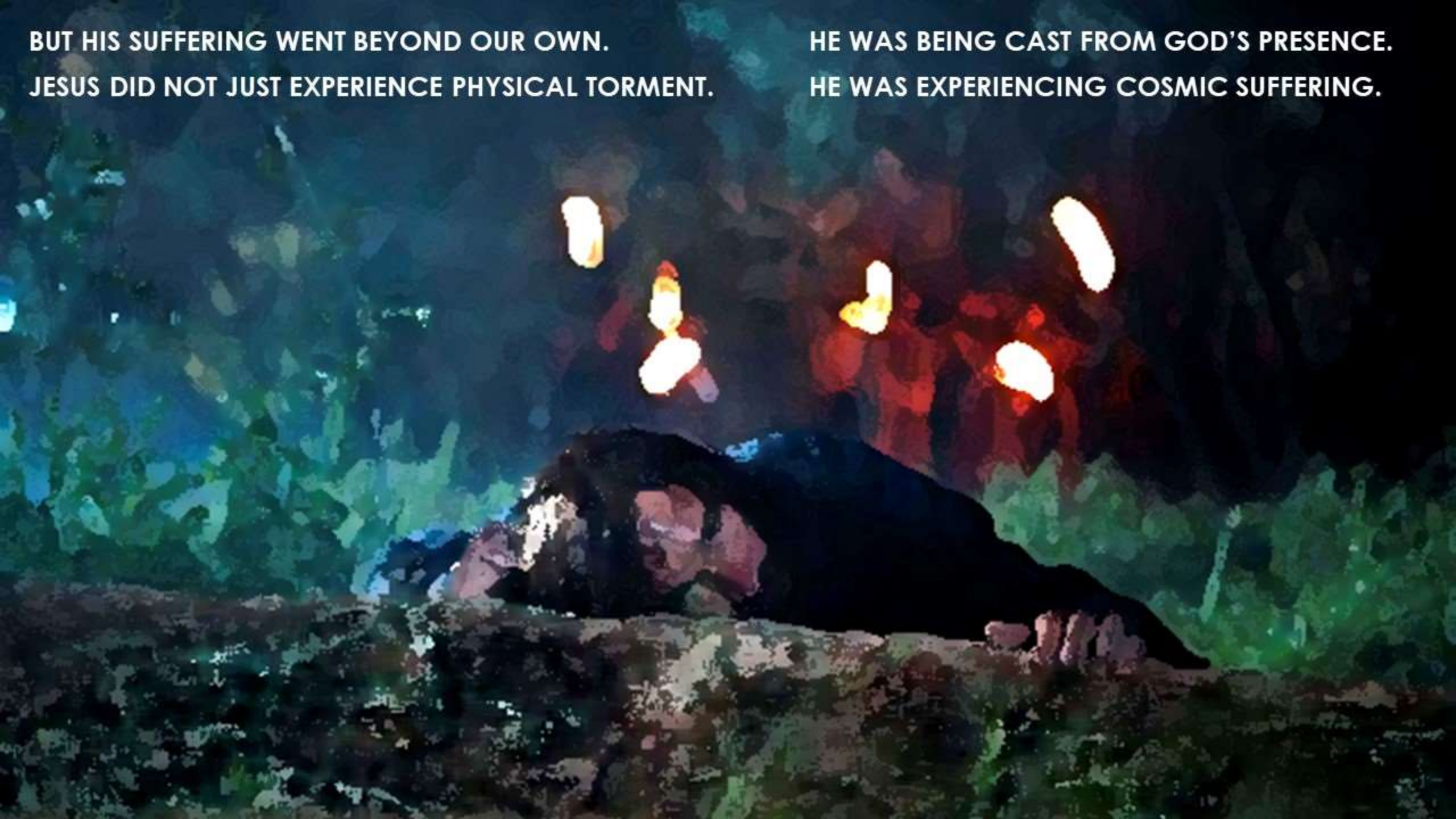
**IF YOU HAVE EVER **ASKED WHY**, LOOK TO CHRIST.**

**HE SUFFERED WHAT WE SUFFER.**



BUT HIS SUFFERING WENT BEYOND OUR OWN.  
JESUS DID NOT JUST EXPERIENCE PHYSICAL TORTURE.

HE WAS BEING CAST FROM GOD'S PRESENCE.  
HE WAS EXPERIENCING COSMIC SUFFERING.





“

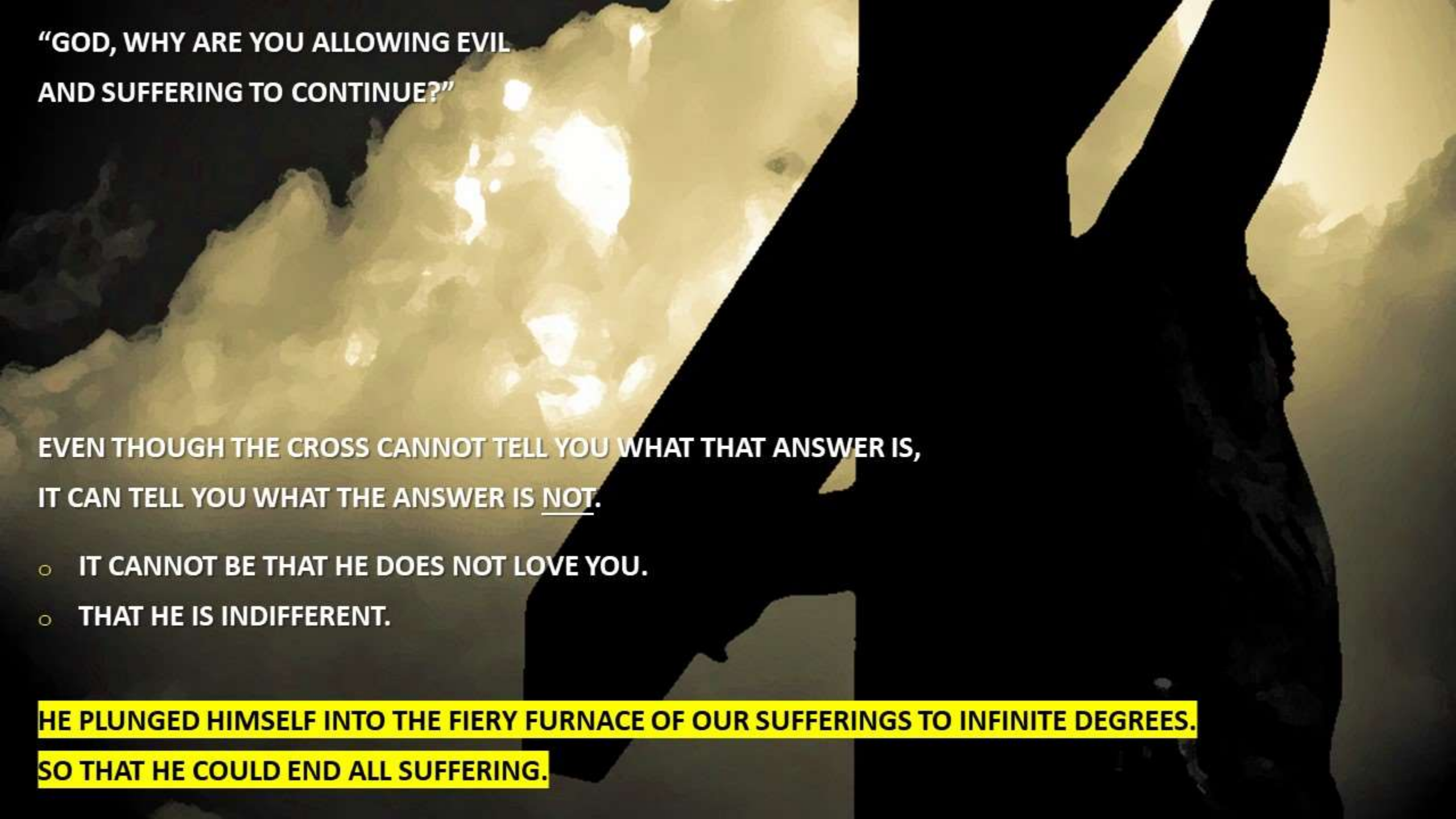
The sorrow and distress which Jesus' soul then suffered arose from a full and immediate view which he had of the cup of wrath which was vastly more terrible than Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace.

Jesus was brought to the mouth of the furnace that he might look into it and stand and view its raging flames and see the glowing of its heat **that he might know where he was going and what he was about to suffer for us.**

– Harvey Floyd

”





**“GOD, WHY ARE YOU ALLOWING EVIL  
AND SUFFERING TO CONTINUE?”**

**EVEN THOUGH THE CROSS CANNOT TELL YOU WHAT THAT ANSWER IS,  
IT CAN TELL YOU WHAT THE ANSWER IS NOT.**

- **IT CANNOT BE THAT HE DOES NOT LOVE YOU.**
- **THAT HE IS INDIFFERENT.**

**HE PLUNGED HIMSELF INTO THE FIERY FURNACE OF OUR SUFFERINGS TO INFINITE DEGREES.  
SO THAT HE COULD END ALL SUFFERING.**

looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith,  
**who for the joy that was set before Him**  
**endured the cross**, despising the shame, and has  
sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

– Hebrews 12.2





A person wearing a dark, textured coat is shown from the side, holding a thick, dark book. The background is a vast, flat landscape under a bright, low sun, creating a warm, golden glow. The person's face is not visible, and the focus is on the book and the overall atmosphere of the scene.

**WHAT COULD MAKE AN INFINITE  
SUFFERING WORTH IT?**

**SO THAT YOU WOULD BE UNSPOILED,  
UNFADING, PERFECT, RESTORED,  
RESURRECTED, GLORIFIED, WITH HIM.**

**THAT IS WHAT FILLED HIM  
WITH JOY AND INFALLIBLE RESOLVE.**



**JESUS WENT INTO THE ULTIMATE FURNACE FOR YOU,  
THE ONLY ONE THAT COULD REALLY CONSUME YOU.**

**YOU HAVE ASSURANCE THAT HE IS WALKING WITH YOU IN YOUR OWN PERSONAL FURNACE  
WHETHER YOU FEEL HIM OR NOT  
NO MATTER HOW HOT  
HE IS NEXT TO YOU.**