

Keeping Ourselves Unspotted from the World
(Lesson 32)

Introduction:

1. According to James 1:27, "keeping ourselves unspotted from the world" is an important part of "pure and undefiled religion before God."
2. How grateful we need to be that the Bible:
 - a. addresses many issues that help us to remain unspotted from the world
 - b. provides examples of God's people keeping themselves unspotted from the world.
3. In this lesson we are examining the occasion in Daniel 3 when Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego did not allow themselves to be spotted by the world.
4. The first point we need to make is that . . .

Discussion:

- I. THESE 3 MEN APPEARED BEFORE NEBUCHADNEZZAR (vs.13)
 - A. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were 3 young Jewish men who had been taken into captivity when the Babylonians invaded Israel.
 - B. Nebuchadnezzar was the king of Babylon [he was idolatrous and quite vain].
 - C. The reason why these 3 young men appeared before the king is revealed in vs.1-12.
 1. (vs.1) The king had made a great image of gold.
 2. (vs.2-7) At the dedication, the king decreed that all people would bow before the image when music was played.
 3. The Jews in Babylon had a decision to make.
 - a. They could obey the king, and their lives would be spared.
 - b. They could obey God, and their souls would be spared (Exodus 20:3-5a).
 4. Because these young men were committed to serving God, they would not bow before the image.
 5. Just because government says that something is right does not make it right (Acts 5:29).
 6. (vs.8-12) These 3 young men were accused of refusing to bow before the image.
 - a. This was a serious matter because they had been set over the affairs of the province of Babylon (2:49).
 - b. When the king heard that they refused to obey his order, he commanded for them to be brought before him.
 - c. This brings us to our next point.
- II. (vs.14-15) THE KING GAVE THEM ANOTHER CHANCE
 - A. If they would fall before the image everything would be well.
 - B. However, if they refused, they would be cast into the furnace.
 - C. The king's statement demonstrated his vanity (vs.15b).
 - D. Let us notice how . . .
- III. THE YOUNG MEN RESPONDED (vs.16-18)
 - A. (vs.16) They were not "careful" [full of care] in giving their answer.
 - B. (vs.17) They stated that God was able to deliver them from the king.
 - C. (vs.18) They said that they were not going to obey the king, even if God did not deliver them.
 - D. Their response shows that they were committed to serving God and that the matter was already settled with them.
- IV. (vs.19-23) THE KING CARRIED OUT HIS THREAT
- V. (VS.24-30) THE REST OF THE STORY

Conclusion:

1. This great story was recorded for our benefit (Romans 15:4).
2. Let us follow the example of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego by:
 - a. sanctifying God in our hearts (1 Peter 3:15a)
 - b. loving God with all of our being (Matthew 22:37)
 - c. being completely devoted to Him (Matthew 6:24).