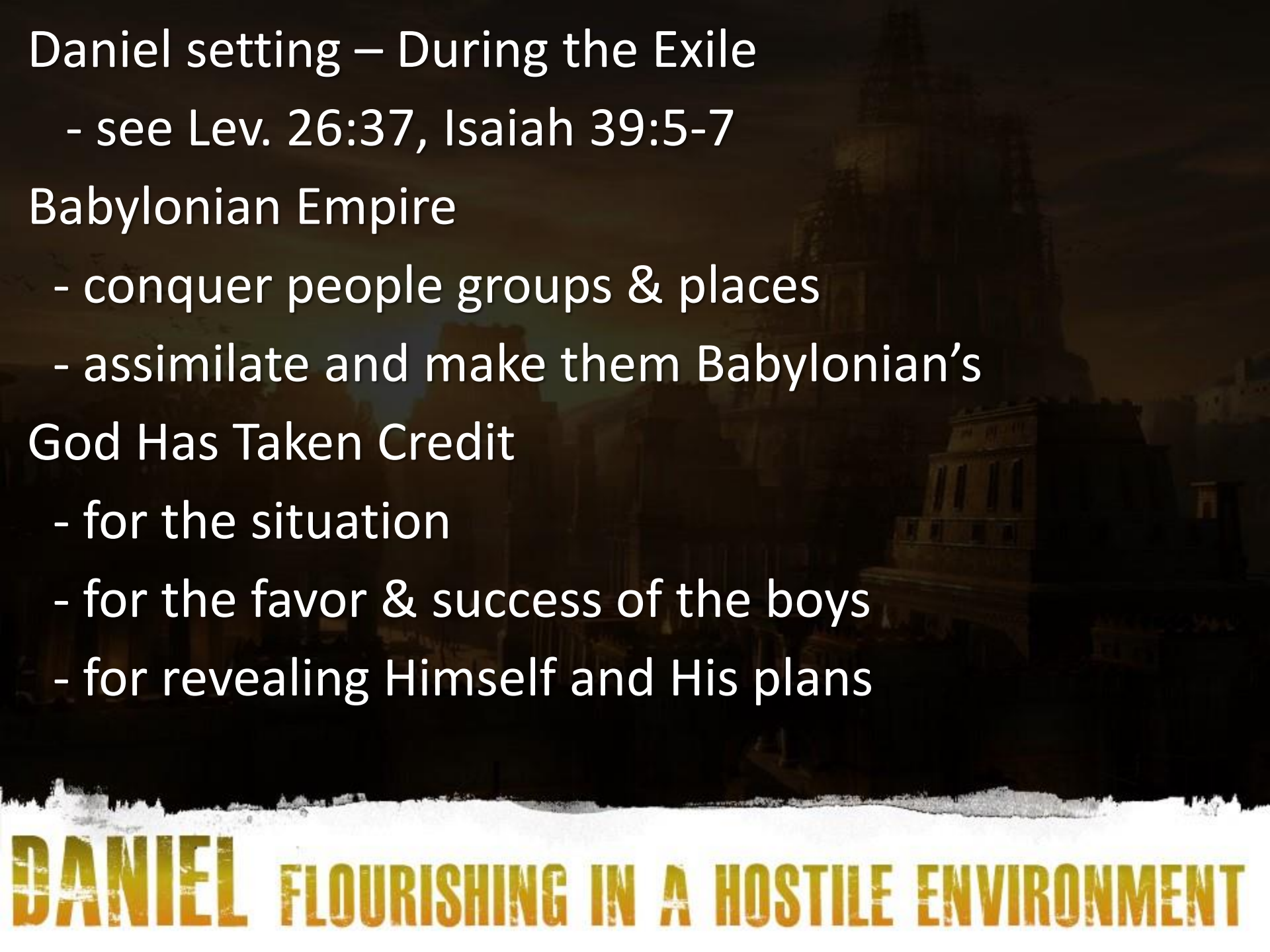


The background image is a composite. On the left, a statue of Moses stands on a pedestal. The central and right portions show a vast, ancient Egyptian city with numerous pyramids and temples under a hazy, sunset sky. In the foreground on the right, a close-up of a man with curly brown hair and a slight beard is visible. A dark rectangular box with a thin yellow border is positioned in the upper left, containing the title text.

Fire and Faith

DANIEL

FLOURISHING IN A HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT

The background of the slide is a dark, atmospheric photograph of the Ishtar Gate in Babylon. The gate's massive, tiered structure is silhouetted against a dim, orange-hued sky, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The architecture features intricate details like windows and doorways, though they are mostly in shadow. The overall mood is mysterious and ancient.

Daniel setting – During the Exile

- see Lev. 26:37, Isaiah 39:5-7

Babylonian Empire

- conquer people groups & places
- assimilate and make them Babylonian's

God Has Taken Credit

- for the situation
- for the favor & success of the boys
- for revealing Himself and His plans

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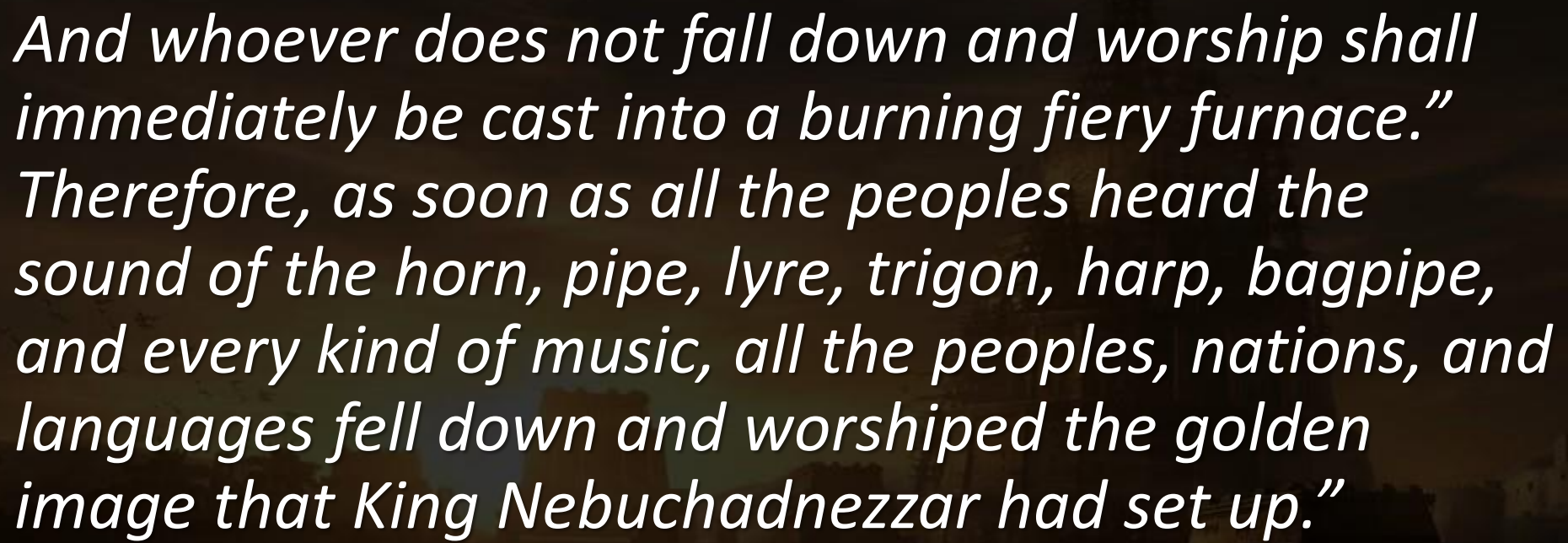
1. The Golden Image 3:1-7

“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. 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.

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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, 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.

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And whoever does not fall down and worship shall immediately be cast into a burning fiery furnace.” 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.”

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a) Huge, Expensive & designed for worship

- propose – idea came from dream 2:31-37

b) Symbol of Power & Pride

- gathers all the leaders
- meant to unite them around King

c) Pride in demanded response

- look what I have done
- worship who I deem
- direct challenge to who is in charge, worthy of the worship of others

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2. The Issue vs. 8-12

“Therefore at that time certain Chaldeans came forward and maliciously accused the Jews. They declared to King Nebuchadnezzar, “O king, live forever! 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. And whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast into a burning fiery furnace. 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.”

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a) Chaldeans out the Jews

- do not bow down and worship

b) The Target

- here because of Daniel 2:49 *“Daniel made a request of the king, and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego over the affairs of the province of Babylon. But Daniel remained at the king’s court”*

- ‘pay no attention to you’,
- ‘serve your gods’
- ‘worship your idol’

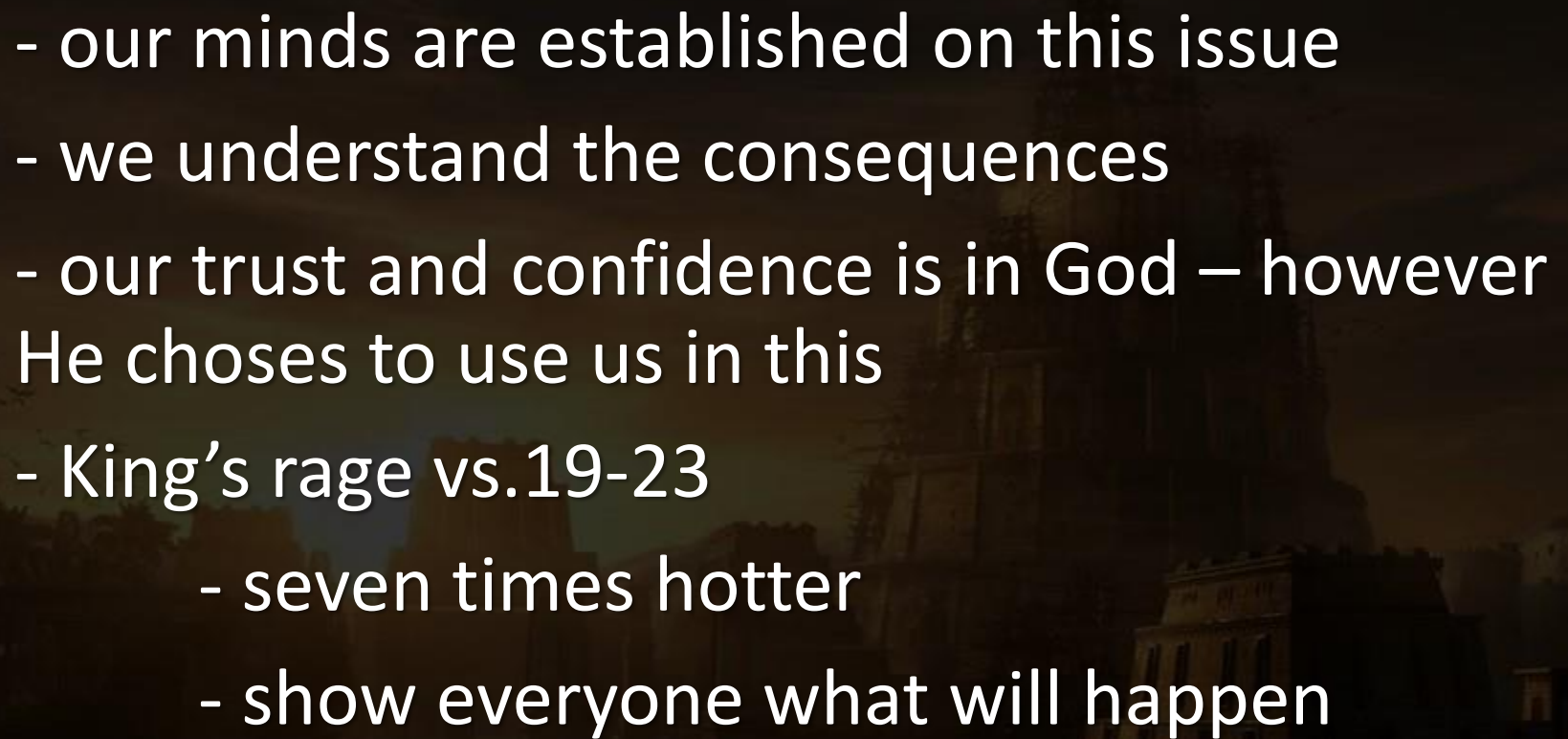
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c) The Confrontation 13-23

- king in a furious rage 13-15
- inquiry – is it true? Cause here are the stakes
- boys' response – 16-18

“Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the king, ‘O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. 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. 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.’”

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- 
- our minds are established on this issue
 - we understand the consequences
 - our trust and confidence is in God – however He chooses to use us in this
 - King's rage vs.19-23
 - seven times hotter
 - show everyone what will happen

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3. The Intervention vs.24-25

a) Power of God on Display

“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.” 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.”

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b) Clear Detail on God's Protection vs.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.”

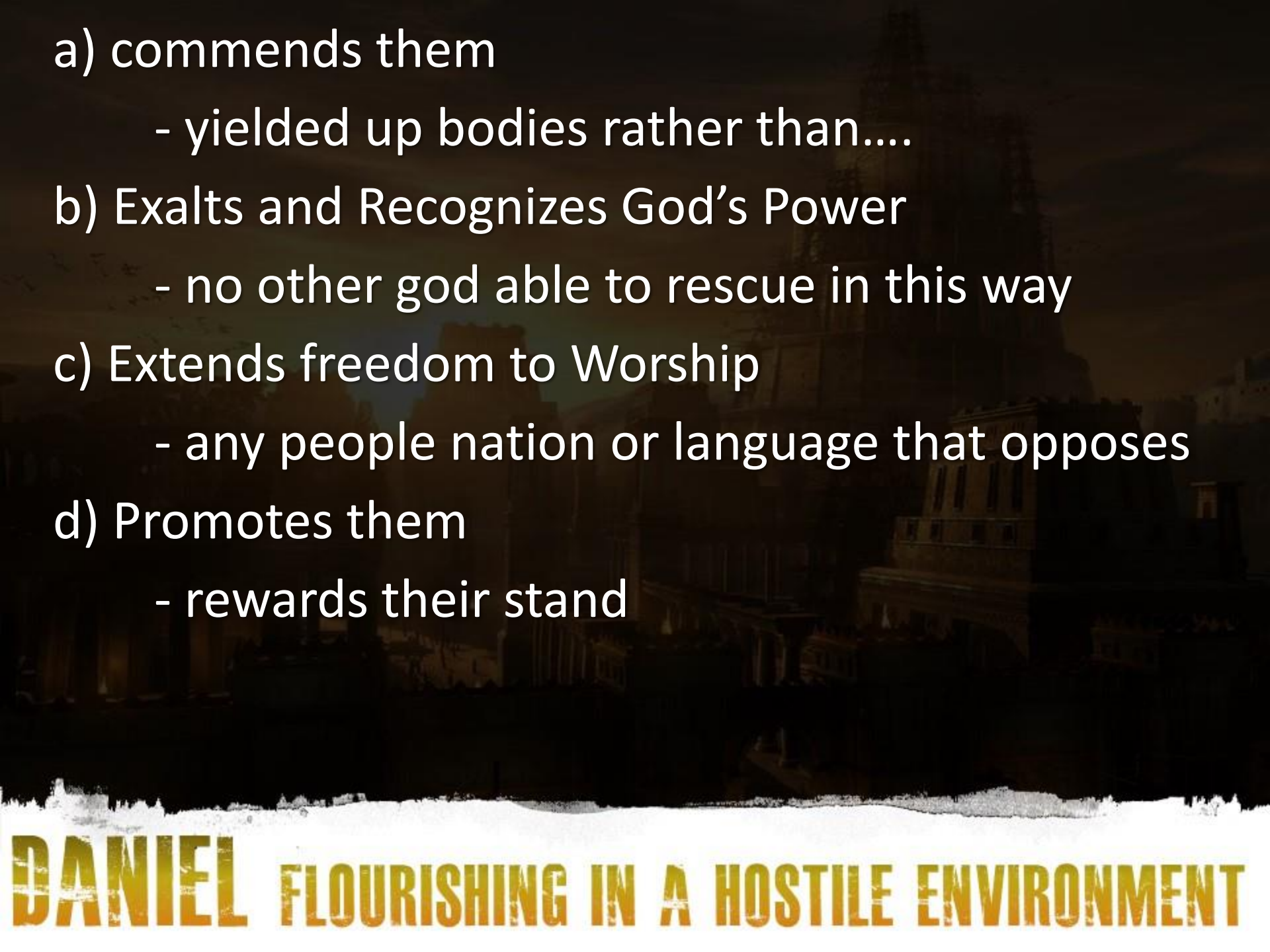
- those tossing them in killed by proximity
- clear nothing affected them
- leaders of the nation get a display

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4. The Impact vs. 28-30

“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. 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.” Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the province of Babylon.”

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a) commends them

- yielded up bodies rather than....

b) Exalts and Recognizes God's Power

- no other god able to rescue in this way

c) Extends freedom to Worship

- any people nation or language that opposes

d) Promotes them

- rewards their stand

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So What

1. Pride and the Human Condition

- all struggle with pride, making idols in our lives
- never fun when others challenge our idol
- Bible speaks clearly about pride & our response
- 1 Cor. 1:26-31

2. Serving Well gets you a Target

- others will call out your differences
- often in situations we didn't see coming

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- enemy who seeks to destroy
- targets will lead to confrontations
- decide before confrontation where you stand

3. Attitude and Perspective are Essential

- God can, yet however He decides we serve
- not protesting, making a point, just serving
- God is for us, yet accomplishing His will

4. God reveals Himself to our World

- plan is to use you as a part

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