

**Daniel;
Fiery
Furnace**

1-25-15

Daniel 3:1 (ESV)

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.

Back in Chapter 2, King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream of an image, a statue that God use to reveal the future. Daniel interpreted that dream which began by telling Nebuchadnezzar the following:

Daniel 2:37–38 (ESV)

You, O king, you are the head of gold.

Nebuchadnezzar was tremendously impressed with Daniel and the interpretation. However he did not grasp the significance. He only focused on him being the head of gold. Therefore he decides to build his own statue, but he makes the whole thing gold not just the head. Along with that Nebuchadnezzar demands all the people bow down and worship the image. How often does this happen? God reveals a great truth and man twists it into something God never intended.

We can already guess that the Jewish people, currently in captivity are going to have an issue with worshipping this image. Let us read the account to understand the context. Then we can glean some lessons and make some current day applications. We start with some of the Babylonian subjects informing the King that some Jews are not compiling with his demands:

Daniel 3:12–30 (ESV)

¹² 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.**

¹³ Then Nebuchadnezzar in **furious rage** commanded that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be brought. So they brought these men before the king.

¹⁴ Nebuchadnezzar answered and said to them, “Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the golden image that I have set up? ¹⁵ Now if you are ready when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, to fall down and worship the image that I have made, well and good. **But if you do not worship, you shall immediately be cast into a burning fiery furnace. And who is the god who will deliver you out of my hands?”**

¹⁶ Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. ¹⁷ 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.

¹⁸ 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.”

¹⁹ Then Nebuchadnezzar was **filled with fury**, and the expression of his face was changed against Shadrach,

Meshach, and Abednego. He ordered the furnace heated seven times more than it was usually heated. ²⁰ And he ordered some of the mighty men of his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and **to cast them into the burning fiery furnace.** ²¹ Then these men were bound in their cloaks, their tunics, their hats, and their other garments, and **they were thrown into the burning fiery furnace.** ²² Because the king's order was urgent and the furnace overheated, the flame of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. ²³ And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell bound into the burning fiery furnace.

²⁴ 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." ²⁵ 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."**

²⁶ Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the door of the burning fiery furnace; he declared, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, **servants of the Most High God**, come out, and come here!" Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out from the fire. 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.

²⁸ 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.** ²⁹ 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.**” ³⁰ Then the king **promoted** Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the province of Babylon.

Lesson #1 Character Decisions Will Be Required:

Daniel 3:16–18 (ESV)

¹⁶ Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, **we have no need to answer you in this matter**¹. ¹⁷ If this be so, **our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace**², and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king³. ¹⁸ **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**⁴.”

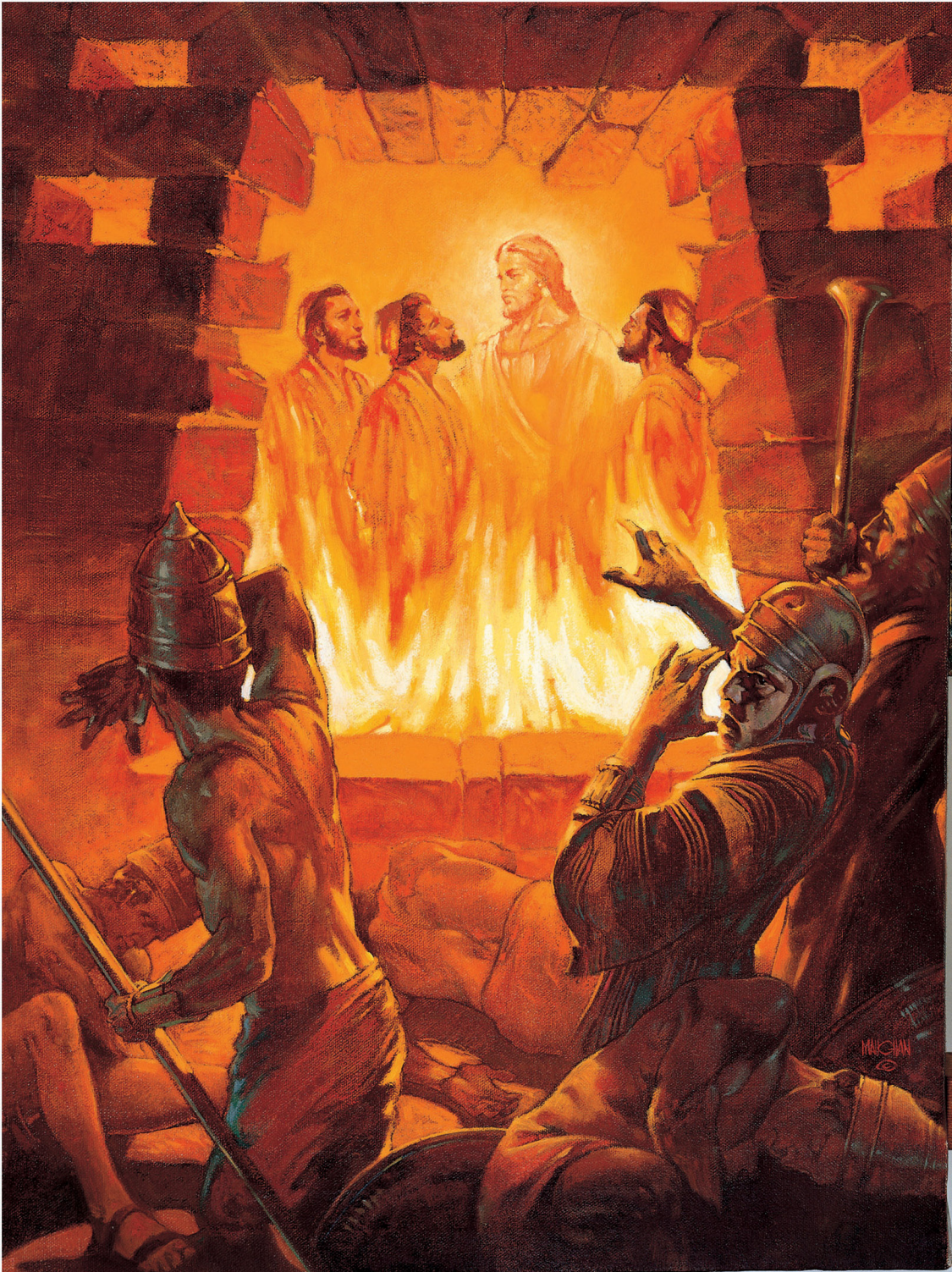
¹Nebuchadnezzar, you knew before you asked.

²Unwavering Faith in the power of God.

³Full assurance that some form of deliverance will come.

⁴But no matter what, we will not serve your gods.

Lesson #2 Jesus Will Be In The Furnace With Us:



Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the Fiery Furnace, by William Maughan, © 1985 IRI

Daniel 3:24–25 (ESV)

²⁴ 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.” ²⁵ 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.”

NOTE: The fourth man is the pre-incarnate Christ.

Last week we looked at having Kingdom insight; God moves, Man moves, and The Impossibility Is The Opportunity. This is true, but when evil moves, we make a character decision to stand against it. **The reality of our faith will be severely tested.**

There will be times when we will experience the fiery furnace. Our hope and our deliverance will not be anything this world has to offer. In these times we often cry out to God, “Where are You?” The truth is, “He is in the fire with us.”

Lesson #3 The Furnace Produces Freedom:

Daniel 3:27 (ESV)

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.

What was meant for destruction and death produces Freedom and Life.

The men were bound hand and foot and nothing was burned but the cords that bound them.

Despite the reasons, circumstances, or situations, God sifts all things through HIS Hands. Therefore Kingdom instruction even comes through times in The Fiery Furnace Of Affliction:

Yes there will be difficulties, but Christ is in the fire with us.

Isaiah 48:10 (ESV)

Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver;
I have tried you in the furnace of affliction.

Yes there will be trials, but the fire will only burn away those things that hinder us.

1 Peter 1:6–7 (ESV)

⁶ 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.

Yes there will be trials, but God has a personal interest in us and will deliver us.

Psalm 106:8 (ESV)

Yet HE saved them for HIS name's sake,
that HE might make known HIS mighty power.

Today in these fiery trials of life that will surely come, we have confidence.

When we are cast into our own Fiery Furnace; our own Furnace of Affliction, we know that:

- **Faith Will Require Character Decisions.**
- **Christ Is In The Fire With Us.**
- **Nothing Burns But The Cords That Bind Us.**

The most intense suffering ever experienced was the avenue to the greatest joy; Forgiveness of sin with nothing held against us and Eternal life with an intimate relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (ESV)

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.