

Read: Daniel 3:16-28

Fired Up for the Lord!

Daniel 3:28

Then Nebuchadnezzar said, “Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who has sent his angel and rescued his servants! They trusted in him and defied the king’s command and were willing to give up their lives rather than serve or worship any god except their own God.”

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

What would you have done? What a tough situation!

Nebuchadnezzar was the wicked king of the Babylonians. He set up a giant gold idol that was 90 feet high and nine feet wide. Then he gave this command—whenever the signal was given, everyone was to bow down and worship that giant false god. But that’s not all! The command went on to say that whoever did not worship it would be thrown into a blazing furnace of fire and die.

Eventually, the signal was given, and everyone bowed down and worshiped. Well, almost everyone, that is. Three of God’s people named Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to bow down. They would not worship any other god besides our one true God.

So King Nebuchadnezzar had them thrown into the fiery furnace. But an amazing miracle happened! The Lord protected Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego so that not only did they not die, but not even a single hair on their heads was burned. Amazing! Nebuchadnezzar was amazed, too. That’s why he spoke the words of the verse for the day. The king praised God for protecting his three people who refused to worship any other God but their own.

It’s pretty unlikely that you will ever have to worry about being thrown into a fiery furnace. No one threatened you with death today because you are a Christian. Praise be to God for the many Christians of the past and in other parts of the world today who boldly trust in God in dangerous situations, like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego did!

But just because your experiences are different, that doesn’t mean being a Christian is easy. Sometimes unbelievers try to convince us to worship other things—like money or fame or power, and yes, other false gods too. Sometimes friends might make fun of us for believing in Jesus or going to church. And yes, sometimes even family members might give us a hard time for worshiping the one true God.

Today we hear an amazing reminder about our gracious and powerful God. The same Savior God who loved us so much that he came to save us and who had the power to defeat death and the devil—that is the same Savior God who is with us every day. God will be with us and bless

us every time our faith is tested. In the toughest moments, God will be there just like he was with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. And yes, even if we face death, we know that God will rescue us by taking us to life with him in heaven. So be bold, be brave, and worship the one true God knowing his grace and power for you!

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- What was the command that wicked King Nebuchadnezzar gave to the people in his kingdom?
- How did Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego show they loved God more than anything?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- In the United States, there are not many giant statues of false gods that people worship. But think of two things people are often tempted to put ahead of God in their lives.
- Explain how Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego putting God first in their lives was also an opportunity to witness to other people.

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Agree/Disagree: Living in the United States where idols of money, fame, and power tempt us is more dangerous to our faith than if we lived in another country with actual idols to false gods. Explain your answer.
- Agree/Disagree: Christians are not afraid of death. Explain your answer.

Closing Prayer:

Dear God, help me to serve and worship you only, always putting you first and before anything else in this world. Amen.