

Character Study: Daniel
Part 3 – The Fiery Furnace
Daniel 3:1-30

What's happening?

• King Nebuchadnezzar decided to make an image of gold for the people to worship. He made an image that was ninety feet tall by nine feet wide. He told everyone to bow down and worship the image whenever certain music played, or else they would be thrown into a fiery furnace. (3:1-7)

• Word got back to the king that Daniel's three friends, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, were not bowing before the image. The men were brought before the king and warned of their fate if they did not bow. The men said that they would not worship the image because they served God, and that God had the power to deliver them. (3:8-18)

• The king was so enraged that he had the furnace turned up seven times hotter than usual and had Daniel's friends thrown into the fire. The heat was so intense it killed the men who threw them in. After a few moments, the king was absolutely amazed to see the men walking around in the fire apparently unharmed. There was even a fourth man with them who appeared to be the Son of God. (3:19-25)

• The king called for the men to come out. He was astonished to find that the three men were not affected by the fire in any way. He blessed their God who had protected them and sent out a decree that anyone who spoke against their God would be killed. Each of the men received a high position of authority in Babylon. (3:26-30)

What's God doing?

> King Nebuchadnezzar had learned of the one true God after Daniel had interpreted his dream, but it had not yet made a lasting impression on him. Now, God used this miracle of delivering Daniel's friends to show the king and the Babylonians that He is truly worthy of all worship.

What's to learn?

→ Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego knew that God could deliver them from the fire, but they did not know if it was necessarily His plan to do so. What they did know was that God cared for them and desired their obedience. They did what was right, even knowing the potential consequences that awaited them. Would you have been so brave? Is your desire to live for God so strong that nothing will stop you from doing His will?