

## Faith in the Fire

Daniel 3: 12-27

As we continue the *Conquerors* series, one of the greatest accounts of overcoming insurmountable odds and obtaining victory is found in the book of Daniel. Along with Daniel and the majority of Judah, three young men had been taken captive into Babylon. While enduring captivity, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were faced with a great dilemma. King Nebuchadnezzar had created a golden image that stood ninety feet tall. A command was given throughout the province, that all should bow and worship the image the king had made when they heard the sound of music being played. These young men were committed to the Lord, and Him alone. Knowing they would face the wrath of the king, these men remained faithful unto the Lord and refused to bow to an image made of man.

While we don't see such images erected in America, the pressures to conform to the dictates of society while abandoning our faith continue to increase. Like these three men, we are rapidly becoming a minority in today's society. As our world continues to distance itself from the Lord, the pressures to adhere to their philosophies will only increase. Like these men of old, we must remain committed to the Lord, knowing He is more than able to provide the strength necessary to endure.

As we examine the [details](#) of this encounter, I want to discuss the thought: [Faith in the Fire](#).

**I. Their Confrontation** (12-15) – These verses describe the confrontation Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego faced regarding the king's command. Notice:

**A. The Accusation** (12) – [There are certain Jews whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; these men, O king, have not regarded thee: they serve not thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.](#) As the music played, and the multitudes began to worship the golden image, these men remained steadfast in their faith and refused to bow. It didn't take long for their refusal to be noticed by others. Early in their captivity, they were prepared for leadership roles within the kingdom. No doubt this brought increased scrutiny from the Babylonians, and their refusal was immediately made known to the king. These advisors sought to make their refusal personal with the king, declaring they had not regarded the king's decree or worshiped the image he had set up.

- Those committed to serving the Lord today are closely watched by those around them. The world rejects our faith and seeks any means to accuse us before others. Many will even attempt to make our obedience to the Lord appear as a direct attack on certain individuals. Opposition is

sure for those committed to serving the Lord. [2 Tim.3:12 – Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.](#)

**B. The Interrogation** (14) – [Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, \*Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?\*](#)

These men were ushered in before the king and questioned regarding their refusal to bow before the king's image of gold. He had heard the accusations and was determined to discover the truth.

- We may never be forced to stand before the authorities because of our faith, and then again we might. Believers no longer enjoy a majority here in America, and remain greatly outnumbered throughout the world. Many who reject the Lord desire to weaken our faith and intimidate those who are committed to the Lord.

**C. The Declaration** (15) – [Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made; \*well\*: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who \*is\* that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?](#) Whatever patience the king may have had was now wearing thin. He assured them that rebellion and disobedience would not be tolerated. There were two options – bow to the image or burn in the fiery furnace. He even through in a bit of sarcasm – “If you don't bow, we will see if your God is able to deliver you.”

- This continues to be a reality for many believers around the world. They are forced to choose between their lives and serving the Lord. While we don't face such intense persecution in America, it may very well come to that. One thing is certain – society declares that we must bow to their philosophies or face its wrath. Christian businesses are being sued in court and facing bankruptcy for standing upon the Word and adhering to Christian principles.

**II. Their Commitment** (16-23) – Here we discover the committed resolve of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. We find:

**A. They were Settled** (16) – [Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, \*O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter.\*](#) Likely the king was surprised at such boldness. The men did not hesitate in answering him. They declared there was nothing to think about or discuss. They were settled in their faith and their minds were made up. “We can tell you right now what we will do!”

- We need that type of deep, settled faith. Our commitment to the Lord and faith in Him should be so strong and convicting that we would not hesitate to stand for Him, even in the face of adversity. I would encourage you to become settled in what you believe, and committed to the Lord in peaceful times so you will know where you stand when trouble comes. We do not have to pray about being committed to Christ. We shouldn't have to ponder what we will do when expected to behave in a way that is contrary to our faith!

**B. They were Surrendered** (17-18) – *If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. <sup>[18]</sup> But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.* This is a picture of genuine faith in the Lord. They declared, “Our God is able to deliver us, and we are confident that He will. But, if by chance He chooses not to deliver us from the fiery furnace, we would rather die than serve your gods or the image you have made!” These men were totally surrendered to the Lord and confident in His will for their lives.

- Such faith is easy to proclaim, but difficult to possess. Peter declared that he was ready to die with Christ, but ended up denying Him when questioned. We must be willing to walk with the Lord and serve Him faithfully if we expect to have that type of faith. A casual, once a week encounter with the Lord on Sunday morning will not produce that type of faith!

**C. They were Steadfast** (19-23) – It was one thing to remain defiant while talking with the king, but it took great courage and faith to face the fiery furnace. They remained resilient in their faith. The king was enraged, demanding the furnace be heated seven times hotter than it had ever been heated. He was determined these men would die for their defiance. The men were bound, with their clothes on, and cast into the furnace. The fire was so hot that those who cast them into the fire perished from the heat coming from the entrance to the furnace.

- Do we possess that type of faith? Are we actually willing to give our lives for the cause of Christ if necessary? These are sobering questions, and yet they must be considered and answered. I am convinced that difficult days lie ahead for the church. Only those who are abiding in the Word and committed to Christ will endure.

**III. Their Companion** (24-27) – Finally we discover that God honored their commitment to Him. Although they faced certain death, He did not forsake them. They were not alone, even in the midst of the fire. Notice:

**A. The Lord's Presence (24-25)** – Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. <sup>[25]</sup> He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God. As Nebuchadnezzar looked into the fiery furnace, he couldn't believe what he saw. He questioned his advisors regarding the number of men thrown into the fire. They affirmed that only Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego had been cast into the fire. Miraculously the king had to admit that there was a fourth man in the fire with them, and He had the form of the Son of God.

- We have no way of knowing what we will face in life, but we do have the assurance that we will never be forced to face our trials alone! Jesus will always be there with us, regardless of what we face. He will never leave or forsake us. In fact, He is gone away to prepare a place for us and will return to call every believer unto Himself!

**B. The Lord's Provision (26-27)** – Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, and spake, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come *hither*. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, came forth of the midst of the fire. <sup>[27]</sup> And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them. Bear in mind, the men who cast them into the fiery furnace perished from the heat. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego survived the furnace and were even able to walk out under their own power. There was no visible damage to their bodies from the heat and flame. Their hair was not singed, their garments were charred, and they didn't even smell like smoke. If you had not witnessed this event, there would have been no way to prove these men had encountered fire at all.

- This reveals the awesome power and grace of the Lord we serve. He is able to allow us to prosper, even in an impossible situation. These men remained faithful, and the Lord met their need. It has been said many times – they didn't bow; they didn't bend, and they didn't burn! Christ is more than able to provide for us, even in the face of certain defeat. He is able to deliver us from the trials and burdens we face, and is faithful to meet us in the midst of the fire! Satan and the world would have us believe we will never survive, but the Lord promised otherwise! **John 10:28-29** – And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand. <sup>[29]</sup> My Father, which gave *them* me, is greater than all; and no *man* is able to pluck *them* out of my Father's hand.

**Conclusion:** The Lord is faithful to those within the body of Christ. If you are struggling today, come to Him for strength and help. If you are unsaved, respond to Him by faith! He is able to provide for your need, enabling you to overcome and experience victory!