

### Outline Three: The Going Gets Tough – An Expository Outline of Daniel Chapter Three

<sup>1</sup> Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height *was* threescore cubits, *and* the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. <sup>2</sup> Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. <sup>3</sup> Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. <sup>4</sup> Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, <sup>5</sup> *That* at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up: <sup>6</sup> And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. <sup>7</sup> Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of musick, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down *and* worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

<sup>8</sup> Wherefore at that time certain Chaldeans came near, and accused the Jews. <sup>9</sup> They spake and said to the king Nebuchadnezzar, O king, live for ever. <sup>10</sup> Thou, O king, hast made a decree, that every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, shall fall down and worship the golden image: <sup>11</sup> And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth, *that* he should be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. <sup>12</sup> 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. <sup>13</sup> Then Nebuchadnezzar in *his* rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Then they brought these men before the king. <sup>14</sup> 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? <sup>15</sup> 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? <sup>16</sup> Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we *are* not careful to answer thee in this matter. <sup>17</sup> 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.

<sup>19</sup> Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: *therefore* he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated. <sup>20</sup> And he commanded the most mighty men that *were* in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, *and* to cast *them* into the burning fiery furnace. <sup>21</sup> Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their *other* garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. <sup>22</sup> Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. <sup>23</sup> And these three men, Shadrach,

Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. <sup>24</sup> 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. <sup>26</sup> 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.

<sup>28</sup> *Then* Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed *be* the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God. <sup>29</sup> Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort. <sup>30</sup> Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, in the province of Babylon. <sup>1</sup>

**I. Trouble Brews on the Plain of Dura:** <sup>1</sup> Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height *was* threescore cubits, *and* the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.

<sup>2</sup> Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. <sup>3</sup> Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the

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<sup>1</sup> [The Holy Bible: King James Version.](#) (1995). (electronic ed. of the 1769 edition of the 1611 Authorized Version., Da 3:1–30). Bellingham WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. <sup>4</sup> Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, <sup>5</sup> *That* at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up: <sup>6</sup> And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. <sup>7</sup> Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of musick, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down *and* worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. <sup>8</sup> Wherefore at that time certain Chaldeans came near, and accused the Jews. <sup>9</sup> They spake and said to the king Nebuchadnezzar, O king, live for ever. <sup>10</sup> Thou, O king, hast made a decree, that every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, shall fall down and worship the golden image: <sup>11</sup> And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth, *that* he should be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. <sup>12</sup> 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. <sup>13</sup> Then Nebuchadnezzar in *his* rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Then they brought these men before the king. <sup>14</sup> 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? <sup>15</sup> 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? <sup>16</sup> Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we *are* not careful to answer thee in this matter. <sup>17</sup> 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.

**A. A Construction of the King:** <sup>1</sup> Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height *was* threescore cubits, *and* the breadth

thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.

**1. Chronology** – a definite time is not known for these events but we can estimate on the basis of fact.

a. Nebuchadnezzar reigned from 605 to 562 BC, a period of 43 years.

b. This took place after the events in the Chapter Two because of verse twelve.

c. In the early part of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar was fighting constantly, ever conquering new ground and we know he came against Jerusalem in 605, 597, and 586 BC. (Note: earlier we brought up the point that God forgave 70 x 7 missing the 70<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical Year, thus 598 BC was the 71<sup>st</sup> Sabbatical Year missed and the final judgment fell that year.) The year 586 BC was 19 years after the first conquest and was the end of his skirmishing with Necho and his Egyptian Army. The rest of his reign was fairly peaceful. So, we may postulate that when he came home

victoriously in the 585 BC, he undoubtedly had cause to celebrate. At any rate this incident must have taken place after the kingdom had stabilized to a certain degree. Thus, we can place this event somewhere in the 585 to 580 BC range.

**2. Construction** - Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, *and* the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.

**a. Nature**—An Image, an idol

**b. Description** –

**1.) Height** = 60 cubits (cubit approximately 18 inches) thus 90 feet tall

**2.) Width** – 6 cubits = 9 feet wide

**3.) Composition** – Gold (overlaid) Isaiah 40:19

**4.) Note on the Numbers:** The 60 and 6 are no accident. God is putting the stamp of man and human religion on the image which is a shadow of one which

the Antichrist and False Prophet shall set up in the Great Tribulation. Six is the number of man (Revelation 13:18) and seven is the number of God.

Six	Seven
Day of Man's Creation	Day of God's Rest
One Number Short of Perfection	Perfection
666 The Number of Man	7 the Number of God

**3. Location:** Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height *was* threescore cubits, *and* the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.

**a. The Plain of Dura**

**b. The Province of Babylon** – Close enough to Babylon to allow for the accommodation of the hundreds of officials who would be there, but far enough away from the beauty of Babylon to allow for a vivid impression upon all who would come.

**B. A Call from the King:** <sup>2</sup> Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers

of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

**1. Issued by the King**

**2. Issued to the Officials**

**a. Princes**

**b. Governors**

**c. Captains**

**d. Judges**

**e. Treasurers**

**f. Counselors**

**g. Sheriffs**

**h. Provincial Rulers:** All officials from various provinces, each part of the structure of Babylonian life were ordered to attend. Anybody who was anybody was there. (Except Daniel, of course.)

**C. A Convocation for the King:** <sup>3</sup> Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs,



and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. <sup>4</sup> Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, <sup>5</sup> *That* at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up: <sup>6</sup> And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. <sup>7</sup> Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of musick, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down *and* worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

**1. Coming of the Rulers:** <sup>3</sup> Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. Note: Two areas of thought must be dealt with here.

First, why was this dedication service held? What was it important that Nebuchadnezzar sponsored such a gathering? Politically speaking, it was a very smart move. Nebuchadnezzar was a victorious general who commanded vast areas of land among cultures which were extremely diverse from his own and from each other. Should he lose some of his military reputation or a weak ruler come to the throne after his demise, there should be some bond to hold his empire together. The ancient Greece and modern Britain used culture and language to hold their empires together. The Romans and the United States of America used economic power and military might to hold their spheres of influence in line. The ancient Romans used emperor worship like what Nebuchadnezzar is proposing here. What Nebuchadnezzar appears to be doing here is using religion, a kind of state church based on Emperor worship. The officials, as good polytheists, would have no reason for objecting to adding another god to their pantheon. So they were on the plain of Dura for the purpose of being indoctrinated and prepared to take the emperor cult home with them.

Second, we should tackle the question – where is Daniel? He was a very high official in Nebuchadnezzar’s court. Yet, he was not at the convocation, even though his three friends were. Why wasn’t he with his friends? Why wasn’t he at the side of his Emperor? Several reasonable explanations have been advanced.

- Some say he was there and was seated near the king and was therefore exempted from the decree to bow. However, this is not a good explanation because he made no protest or plea for the life of his friends.
- Some have argued that Daniel was away on state business or perhaps manning the command center in the capitol in case something came up. This is certainly plausible, but there is no evidence for the supposition.
- My personal conviction is that Daniel was ordered not to attend. As the king’s favorite advisor, he was simply too valuable to sacrifice for this scheme. I think Nebuchadnezzar knew how Daniel would have felt about this plan of his and he knew Daniel would never bow down.

Thus, to spare Daniel the king ordered him to stay in Babylon away from the test, away from the potential of “treason” charges and away from the probability of certain death. Apparently, Daniel’s three friends had no such standing before the king and he expected them to yield at his command.

**2. A Command from their Ruler:** <sup>4</sup> Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, <sup>5</sup> *That* at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up: <sup>6</sup> And whoso falleth not down and worshipping shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

**a. An Universal Address:** <sup>4</sup> Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages,

**b. An Unusual Request:** <sup>5</sup> *That* at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up:

**c. An Ultimate Penalty:** <sup>6</sup> And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. Note: Just a reminder, most polytheist nations would have no objections to bowing down to another idol god. The penalty was put in for the Jews who alone were monotheistic. Nebuchadnezzar really was convinced he could scare them into bowing down, and it worked on all but three of the Jews.

**3. The Call to “Worship”:** <sup>7</sup> Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of musick, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down *and* worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

**D. The Chaldeans Stir Up the King:** <sup>8</sup> Wherefore at that time certain Chaldeans came near, and accused the Jews. <sup>9</sup> They spake and said to the king Nebuchadnezzar, O king, live for ever. <sup>10</sup> Thou, O king, hast made a decree, that every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, shall fall down and worship the golden image: <sup>11</sup> And whoso falleth not

down and worshipping, *that* he should be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. <sup>12</sup> 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.

**1. The Scheming Chaldeans Seize Their Chance:** <sup>8</sup>Wherefore at that time certain Chaldeans came near, and accused the Jews. Note: They were jealous of the Jews and particularly Daniel who had been promoted over them. How quickly they forgot that Daniel had saved all their lives. They could not get at Daniel, but they could get at his friends. Could I just point out that they must have been doing a little looking around during the opening prayer to have seen Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were not bowing down.

**2. The Flattering Chaldeans Make a Speech:** <sup>9</sup>They spake and said to the king Nebuchadnezzar, O king, live for ever. <sup>10</sup> Thou, O king, hast made a decree, that every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, shall fall down and worship the golden

image: <sup>11</sup> And whoso falleth not down and worshipping, *that* he should be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. <sup>12</sup> 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.

**a. They saluted the king whom they wished to use.** <sup>9</sup>

They spake and said to the king Nebuchadnezzar, O king, live for ever.

**b. They rehearsed the decree with an emphasis on the**

**fact that it was his decree.** <sup>10</sup> Thou, O king, hast made a decree, that every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, shall fall down and worship the golden image:

**c. They reminded him of the penalty.** <sup>11</sup> And whoso

falleth not down and worshipping, *that* he should be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. Note: This they did to force his hand in front of the thousands of rulers that had

gathered. He could not back out of it now. They had Nebuchadnezzar on the spot and they loved it.

**d. They accused the three men before him:** <sup>12</sup> 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.

**1.) Identification**

**a.) By their office**

**b.) By their names**

**2.) Indictments = equal treason**

**a.) Rejection of the King's Authority**

**b.) Rejection of the King's gods**

**c.) Rejection of the King's Commands**

**E. The Courage of the Captives:** <sup>13</sup> Then Nebuchadnezzar in *his* rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.



Then they brought these men before the king. <sup>14</sup> 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? <sup>15</sup> 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? <sup>16</sup> Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we *are* not careful to answer thee in this matter. <sup>17</sup> 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.

**1. The Call of the King:** <sup>13</sup> Then Nebuchadnezzar in *his* rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Then they brought these men before the king.

**a. The Call Issued:** <sup>13</sup> *Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Then they brought these men before the king.*

**b. The Call Obeyed:** <sup>13</sup> *Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Then they brought these men before the king.*

**2. The Consideration of the King:** <sup>14</sup> *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? <sup>15</sup> 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?*

**a. The Benefit of the Doubt Extended:** <sup>14</sup>  
*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?

**b. The Second Chance Offered:** <sup>15</sup> *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?*

**c. The Stern Challenge Issued:** <sup>15</sup> *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?* Note – Nebuchadnezzar knew firsthand the power of the God of Daniel. But he thought that the Revealer of dreams might not be as powerful as he himself was. He had fallen for his

own propaganda! It is both the height of egotism and the depth of spiritual ignorance that we find on display here.

**3. The Courage of the Captives:** <sup>16</sup> Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we *are* not careful to answer thee in this matter. <sup>17</sup> 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.

**a. Unanimous Reply:** <sup>16</sup> Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we *are* not careful to answer thee in this matter. Note – We are not afraid to answer for our actions

**b. Unwavering Faith:** <sup>17</sup> 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.

**1.) God is able to deliver them from both the fire and the king.**

**2.) God may not choose to deliver them, but they would not change their minds either way. They would live for God or die trying.**

**II. The Triumphant Trio on the Plain of Dura:** <sup>19</sup>Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: *therefore* he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated. <sup>20</sup>And he commanded the most mighty men that *were* in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, *and* to cast *them* into the burning fiery furnace. <sup>21</sup>Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their *other* garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. <sup>22</sup>Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. <sup>23</sup>And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. <sup>24</sup>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. <sup>26</sup> 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, <sup>25</sup> 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. <sup>28</sup> *Then* Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed *be* the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God. <sup>29</sup> Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other God that

can deliver after this sort. <sup>30</sup> Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, in the province of Babylon.

**A. An Execution:** <sup>19</sup> Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: *therefore* he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated. <sup>20</sup> And he commanded the most mighty men that *were* in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, *and* to cast *them* into the burning fiery furnace. <sup>21</sup> Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their *other* garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. <sup>22</sup> Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. <sup>23</sup> And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

**1. An Order Given:** <sup>19</sup> Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: *therefore* he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont

to be heated. <sup>20</sup> And he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast *them* into the burning fiery furnace.

**a. The Condition of the King:** <sup>19</sup> *Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: therefore he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated.*

**1.) Full of Fury**

**2.) Face of Disfavor**

**b. The Commandments Concerning the Execution:** <sup>19</sup> Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: *therefore he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated.*

**1.) The Furnace to be heated up**



## 2.) The Offenders to be tied up

## 3.) The Offenders to be burned up

**2. The Order Carried Out:** <sup>21</sup> Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their *other* garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. <sup>22</sup> Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. <sup>23</sup> And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

**a. The Condition of the Captives:** <sup>21</sup> Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their *other* garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

**b. The Cost of the Command:** <sup>22</sup> Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

**c. The Command Completed:** <sup>23</sup> And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

**B. An Exclamation:** <sup>24</sup> 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.

**1. The Frightened Question of the King:** <sup>24</sup> 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.

**2. The Frank Question of the Counselors:** <sup>24</sup> 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.

**3. The Frightening Vision of the 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.

**a. The Bound are Free:** <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.*

**b. The Three are Joined:** <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.* Note – Nebuchadnezzar said more than he knew here. He thought the fourth person was like unto the Son of God. He might have considered this appearance to be simply an angel, but instinctively he sensed that this was a Christophany or pre-incarnate appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Old Testament.

**C. An Examination:** <sup>26</sup> 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.

**1. An Order Given:** <sup>26</sup> *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.

**a. Recognition of who they were:**

**b. Request that they come out:**

**2. Obedience Continues:** <sup>26</sup> 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.*

**3. The Observation of the Assembly:** <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.

**a. The Fire had no power on them.**

**b. Their Hair was not singed.**

**c. Their Clothes were not burned.**

**d. They did not smell of fire.**

**e. An observation:** Note—For all Scripture there is one and only one primary interpretation. The fiery furnace teaches concerning God's care for His true believers and by extension for Israel in captivity. However, all Scripture has several practical applications for all believers. This passage shows God's care for His own whenever and where ever the need arises. Also, many Scriptures have a

prophetic application which foreshadows future events.

The nation of Israel will be cast into the furnace of Gentile power but cannot ever be consumed.

**D. An Exaltation:** <sup>28</sup> *Then* Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed *be* the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God. <sup>29</sup> Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort. <sup>30</sup> Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, in the province of Babylon.

**1. The King's Declamation:** <sup>28</sup> *Then* Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed *be* the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and

yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God.

**a. Praise for God:** <sup>28</sup> *Then* Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed *be* the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God.

**1.) God that controls Angels**

**2.) God that rescues Saints**

**b. Praise for God's Men:** <sup>28</sup> *Then* Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed *be* the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God.

**1.) They trusted God.**

**2.) They obeyed God.**

### **3.) They yielded themselves to God alone.**

**2. The King's Decree:** <sup>29</sup> Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort.

**a. An Universal Decree:** <sup>29</sup> Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort.

**b. An Ultimate Decree:** <sup>29</sup> Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort.



**3. The King Decorates the Trio:** <sup>30</sup> Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, in the province of Babylon.

### **Further Notes**