

SHADRACH, MESHACH, AND ABED-NEGO IN THE FIERY FURNACE

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Reading: Daniel 3

How much do you trust the Lord? This morning we read a story about some men who trusted the Lord so much that they were ready to give up their lives in order to follow Him. You remember who they were. Their names were Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. These three men were living in a foreign country, but they very much loved the Lord. Every day they worshiped the Lord as the Lord had asked them to. They would say their prayers. However, the king of that foreign land called Babylon, a king named Nebuchadnezzar, did not understand their love to the Lord. He asked them to worship a huge image of himself which he had made.

Imagine a king thinking that he was the Lord, and expecting people who really knew about the Lord to worship him! Well, these three men would not do what the king wanted. So they had to face the penalty of the law which meant that they would be burnt to death in a fiery furnace. These men knew very well that they were going to die if they did not do what the king said. But they trusted in the Lord. They believed that if they kept doing what was right the Lord would be with them and protect them. They knew that even if they died in that fiery furnace the Lord would be with them.

King Nebuchadnezzar was angry at these men for their strong trust. So he wanted to hurt them worse than he might normally punish someone. He asked his servants to make the fire seven times hotter than normal. In fact the fire got so hot that when one of the king's men went to stoke the fire he died from the heat. At last the king thought the fire was hot enough and he had Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego tied up and thrown into the huge furnace.

A little while later the king wanted to make sure that his punishment had succeeded. And so he looked down into that furnace. To his amazement he saw people walking around in the fire. Even more surprising, there were four people there! The king called to others to look. "How many people are there?" he asked. "How many people did we cast into the fire?" "Three" was the answer. "But I see four, and one is like the Son of God," answered the king. The Lord had sent his angel to protect Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego. The angel had untied them, and they were not in the least bit burnt by the fire. The Lord's power to protect them was complete. He had saved them.

Family Talk

The Lord's power is always perfect. Any time that you are facing the temptations of evil spirits, if you pick up the Lord's Word and start to read it, if you bring the Lord to you, and if you pray to Him for help, He will be right there ready to protect you from all the hatred and selfishness which comes like a fire from hell. That is a wonderful thing to know. It is also very important that we have the kind of trust that Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego had, so that we truly can, even in the face of the greatest temptations, stand up to evil spirits and trust in the Lord. If we have that kind of courage, the Lord will be with us and guide us and help us to find the happiness of heaven.

Amen.