### Daniel

## Chapter 3

1It was during his 16th year that King NebuChadnezzar had a gold-[plated] idol made that stood 100 feet (30.5m) tall and 10 feet (3m) wide, which he placed in the plains of Dura, near Babylon.  
  
2So he then called for all of his top officials, generals, lieutenants, governors, vassal kings, 3and everyone else of authority throughout all of his districts, and decreed that they should come and [celebrate] a holiday of dedication for the idol that he had erected.  
  
So everyone came and stood before the idol that NebuChadnezzar had erected, 4and then the [king’s] herald yelled at the top of his voice:  
  
 ‘O nations, peoples, tribes, and languages,  
  
 ‘You’ve been told that 5when you hear the sound of the trumpets, woodwinds, harps, stringed instruments, and bagpipes playing the anthem, you must all fall to your faces and bow before the idol of gold that King NebuChadnezzar has erected.  
  
 6‘And if anyone should choose not to bow before it, he will be immediately taken out and thrown into a blazing-hot furnace!’  
  
7So when the people heard the sounds of the trumpets, woodwinds, harps, stringed instruments, and bagpipes playing the anthem, all the peoples, tribes, and languages bowed low before the gold idol that King NebuChadnezzar had erected.  
  
8However, certain Chaldeans then went up and made an accusation against the Jews… 9They went to King NebuChadnezzar and said:  
  
 ‘O king,  
  
 ‘May you live throughout the ages!  
  
 10‘However, the king gave an order that when we hear the sound of the trumpets, woodwinds, harps, stringed instruments, and bagpipes playing the anthem, 11any man who doesn’t fall and bow before the gold idol should be thrown into a blazing furnace.  
  
 12‘Now, there were three Jewish men whom you’ve put over construction in Babylon – ShadRach, MeShach, and AbedNego – and they didn’t obey your decree, O king!  
  
 ‘For they’ve chosen not to serve your gods or to bow before the gold idol that you’ve erected.’  
  
13Well at that, NebuChadnezzar flew into an angry rage and he had them bring ShadRach, MeShach, and AbedNego before him.  
  
14Then NebuChadnezzar said to them:  
  
 ‘ShadRach, MeShach, and AbedNego, is it true that you won’t serve my gods, and that you won’t bow before the gold idol that I’ve erected?  
  
 15‘Well now, when you hear the sound of trumpets, woodwinds, harps, stringed instruments, and bagpipes playing the anthem, it would be best for you to fall to your faces before the gold idol that I’ve made. Because, if you don’t bow to your faces before it, you’ll be taken out immediately, and then thrown into a blazing-hot furnace… And then we’ll see which God can rescue you from my hands!’  
  
16But ShadRach, MeShach, and AbedNego said this to King NebuChadnezzar:  
  
 ‘We don’t really have to answer you about this matter, 17for our God in the heavens (whom we serve) can rescue us from the fire in the furnace… And He will rescue us from your hands, O king!  
  
 18‘Yet, even if He shouldn’t choose to do this, you must know, O king, that we won’t serve your gods, or the gold idol that you’ve set up and told us to bow before.’  
  
19Well, NebuChadnezzar was furious! The way that he viewed ShadRach, MeShach, and AbedNego suddenly started to change. So he gave instructions to heat the furnace seven times hotter than usual… Until they couldn’t get it any hotter! 20Then he gave some powerful men instructions to shackle ShadRach, MeShach, and AbedNego, and then throw them into the blazing-hot furnace.  
  
21So the three were shackled and then thrown into the midst of the blazing-hot furnace fully clothed, [wearing their] pants, underclothes, and official turbans. 22And following the instruction of the king, the furnace had in fact been made seven times hotter than usual.  
  
23Well, the three men (ShadRach, MeShach, and AbedNego) fell into the midst of the blazing furnace wearing shackles… But then they started walking around in the midst of the flames, praising God and blessing their lord!  
  
24And when NebuChadnezzar heard their praising, he was shocked! So he quickly got up and asked his mighty men this:  
  
 ‘Didn’t you throw three men wearing shackles into the midst of the fire?’  
  
And they replied:  
  
 ‘Yes we did, O king.’  
  
25But the king said:  
  
 ‘I see four men here that are freely walking around in the midst of the flames, and none of them are being burned! And the vision that I’m having of the fourth one is as that of a son of God!’  
  
26Then NebuChadnezzar leaned forward towards the top of the blazing furnace and said this:  
  
 ‘O ShadRach, MeShach, and AbedNego!  
  
 ‘You servants of the highest God, come here!  
  
 ‘Come out of there!’  
  
So ShadRach, MeShach, and AbedNego came out from the midst of the flames, 27and then all the governors, generals, lieutenants, and king’s officials were called over to see these men, and to [witness the fact] that the fire hadn’t consumed their bodies! For the hair on their heads hadn’t been singed, their [clothes] were still the same, and there wasn’t even the smell of smoke on them!  
  
28Then, right there before them all, the king bowed to Jehovah and said:  
  
 ‘Praise the God of ShadRach, MeShach, and AbedNego who sent His messenger and rescued His servants that put faith in Him. For these men changed the word of the king and then they offered their bodies in fire, because they wouldn’t serve any god other than their God!  
  
29So thereafter, the king issued this decree:  
  
 ‘Any people, tribe, or language that speaks blasphemously against the God of ShadRach, MeShach, and AbedNego will be destroyed and their houses will be pillaged… For there’s no other god who can rescue in such a great way.’  
  
30Then the king promoted ShadRach, MeShach, and AbedNego to be over all regions of the [Empire of] Babylon. He also paid them more, and he put them in charge over all the Jews in his realm.  
  
  
Then sometime later, the king [wrote this] about [something else that had happened to him]: