

Fiery Furnace

August 31 | Stephanie Fehr



Simplistic version

- Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego followed God
- They worked for the king and refused to worship the king
- The king sent them to a furnace but God rescued them
- The king was amazed that they followed God no matter what
- And that's a part of God's story



Simplistic version

- Veggie Tales: "Rack, Shack, & Benny"
- Moral:
 - "If someone is trying to peer pressure you into doing something you know is wrong or uncomfortable, you need to be able to stand firm and do what is right, no matter how hard it may be"
 - "Faith in God will protect you when facing hardships."



Simplistic version

- Religious Culture to Daniel:
 1. heroic examples of faith that we are to emulate
 2. predictions that we are to decode and align with



Context

- **Daniel is a Minor Prophet**
 - **Minor Prophet Theme examples:** warnings against sin, promises of hope and restoration
- **Happens after Babylons first attack on Jerusalem**
- **Daniel 1:1: "...Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it."**
- **v.2: Babylonia - Shinar - Tower of Babel**



Context

- **Daniel (Belteshazzar)**
- **Hananiah (Shadrach)**
- **Mishael (Meshach)**
- **Azariah (Abednego)**



Context

- **The book of Daniel is to offer hope to all future generations of God's people.**
- **Stories of faithfulness despite persecution**
- **Visions to encourage patience to wait for God to bring his kingdom and rule and vindicate his people**
- **Threads that connect to Jesus**



Context

- **Daniel ch.1: Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego are in Babylon; remain faithful to God; well-liked by king**
- **Daniel ch.2: King Nebuchadnezzar has dream Daniel interprets; all four are promoted**



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- **The King's Decree (vv.1-7)**
 - **v.1:** statue is built; 90 ft tall, 9 ft wide; gold
 - **v.2-6:** establishes plan for worship of statue idol
 - **v.7:** the worship happens; everyone participates or they will be thrown into the furnace



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- **Defiance of the King's Decree (vv.8-18)**
 - **Vv.8-12:** a few are not worshipping the idol and are tattled on to the king
 - **vv.13-15:** the king confronts Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego
 - **vv.16-18:** Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refuse to worship the idol; remain faithful to God
 - **v.18:** "But even if he does not..."



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- **Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego's response:**
 - Shows deep faith, no *quid pro quo*
 - A created idol
 - **Isaiah 44:** people make their own idols and then ask to be saved
 - Kings use idols for control



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- **Trial by Fire (vv.19-23)**
 - **King Nebuchadnezzar rages; Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego thrown into furnace heated seven times hotter**



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- **The Divine Deliverance (vv.24-30)**
 - **v.24: “Weren’t there three men that we tied up and threw into the fire?”**
 - **Fourth figure: “...like a son of the gods.” (v.25)**
 - **Change of heart in Nebuchadnezzar: praises God (vv.28-30)**



What are we learning about God?

- **God is powerful and protector, that he is capable of delivering us from difficult experiences, but even if he does not deliver us in that moment... that there is still hope**



What are we learning about God?

Habakkuk 3:17-18:

**Though the fig tree does not bud
and there are no grapes on the vines,
though the olive crop fails
and the fields produce no food,
though there are no sheep in the pen
and no cattle in the stalls,
yet I will rejoice in the Lord,
I will be joyful in God my Saviour.**



In closing of whole series

- **Approach scripture with historical and biblical context**
- **With open hands and humble posture**
- **Seek to grow in our understandings and interpretations together as a community**
- **Scripture may be formational for us... helping us to be formed more and more like Christ, and more and more into people who love God, love one another, and love others**

