

# HOW TO STAY COOL IN A FIERY FURNACE

Courage in the Time of Compromise – The Book of Daniel  
Part 5

Daniel 3:1 & 3-6 – [1] *“King Nebuchadnezzar made a gold statue ninety feet tall and nine feet wide and set it up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. [4] A herald shouted out, ‘People of all races and nations and languages, listen to the king’s command! [5] When you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes, and other instruments, bow to the ground to worship King Nebuchadnezzar’s gold statue. [6] Anyone who refuses to obey will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace.”* (New Living)

## FOUR ELEMENTS IN OUR WESTERN CULTURE...

- 1. The world creates larger- than-life images for me to worship**
- 2. I’m tempted to create a false image of myself to impress others**
- 3. If I reject the world’s images and idols, people will try to burn me**

Daniel 3:8 & 12 – [8] *But some of the astrologers went to the king and informed on the Jews. [12] There are some Jews—Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego—whom you have put in charge of the province of Babylon. They have defied Your Majesty by refusing to serve your gods or to worship the gold statue you have set up.* (New Living)

- 4. Doing right as defined by the Bible always makes some people angry**

Daniel 3:13-15 – [13] *“Then Nebuchadnezzar flew into a rage and ordered Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to be brought before him. When they were brought in, [14] Nebuchadnezzar said to them, ‘Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you refuse to serve my gods or to worship the gold statue I have set up? [15] I will give you one more chance. If you bow down and worship the statue I have made when you hear the sound of the musical instruments, all will be well. But if you refuse, you will be thrown immediately into the blazing furnace. What god will be able to rescue you from my power then?”* (New Living)

## HOW DO I HANDLE FIERY TRIALS?

- 1. DON’T WORRY ABOUT DEFENDING YOURSELF – STAND UP FOR WHAT IS**

## **BIBLICALLY CORRECT**

Daniel 3:16 – “*Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego replied, ‘O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you.’*” (New Living)

### **2. REMEMBER GOD HAS THE POWER TO SAVE ME ETERNALLY**

Daniel 3:17a – “*If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God whom we serve is able to save us.*” (New Living)

### **3. BELIEVE IN GOD’S ABILITY TO HELP ME**

Daniel 3:17b – “*He will rescue us from your power, Your Majesty.*” (New Living)

### **4. ANNOUNCE MY LOYALTY TO GOD NO MATTER WHAT**

Daniel 3:18 – “*But even if he doesn't, Your Majesty can be sure that we will never serve your gods or worship the gold statue you have set up.*” (New Living)

Daniel 3:19 – “*Nebuchadnezzar was so furious with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego that his face became distorted with rage. He commanded that the furnace be heated seven times hotter than usual.*” (New Living)

The king’s reaction...

Daniel 3:20-23 – [20] “*Then he ordered some of the strongest men of his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and throw them into the blazing furnace. [21] So they tied them up and threw them into the furnace, fully clothed. [22] And because the king, in his anger, had demanded such a hot fire in the furnace, the flames leaped out and killed the soldiers as they threw the three men in! [23] So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, securely tied, fell down into the roaring flames.*” (New Living)

## **BENEFITS IN TRUSTING GOD IN THE “FIRES” OF LIFE...**

### **1. GOD WALKS WITH YOU IN THE DIFFICULTIES OF LIFE**

2 Timothy 4:16b-17a [Paul] – [16b] “*Everyone deserted me...*[17a] *But the Lord stood with me and gave me strength...*” (NIV & New Living)

Daniel 3:24-25 & 28a – [24] *“But suddenly, as he was watching, Nebuchadnezzar jumped up in amazement and exclaimed to his advisers, ‘Didn’t we tie up three men and throw them into the furnace?’ ‘Yes,’ they said, ‘we did indeed, Your Majesty.’ [25] ‘Look!’ Nebuchadnezzar shouted. ‘I see four men, unbound, walking around in the fire. They aren’t even hurt by the flames! And the fourth looks like a god!’ [28a] Then Nebuchadnezzar said...‘He sent his angel to rescue his servants who trusted in him.’”* (New Living)

## **2. GOD WILL BURN THE MANMADE ROPES OFF YOU**

Daniel 3:25b – *“I saw four men, unbound, walking around in the fire.”* (New Living)

1 Peter 4:12-13 – [12] *“Dear friends, don’t be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. [13] Instead, be very glad—because these trials will make you partners with Christ in his suffering, and afterward you will have the wonderful joy of sharing his glory when it is displayed to all the world.”* (New Living)

## **3. GOD WILL KEEP YOU FROM ETERNAL HARM**

Daniel 3:26-27 – [26] *“Then Nebuchadnezzar came as close as he could to the door of the flaming furnace and shouted: ‘Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out! Come here!’ So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego stepped out of the fire. [27] Then the princes, prefects, governors, and advisers crowded around them and saw that the fire had not touched them. Not a hair on their heads was singed, and their clothing was not scorched. They didn’t even smell of smoke!”* (NLT)

## **4. YOUR FAITH WILL BE A POWERFUL WITNESS TO NONBELIEVERS**

Daniel 3:28 – *“Then Nebuchadnezzar said, ‘Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who has sent his angel and rescued his servants! They trusted in him and defied the king’s command and were willing to give up their lives rather than serve or worship any god except their own God.’”* (NIV)

Daniel 3:29 – *“Therefore I make this decree...There is no other god who can save [rescue] like this!”* (NIV & New Living)

[PICTURE – Jack Pine Cone]

## 5. FAITHFUL OBEDIENCE SOMETIMES RESULTS IN PHYSICAL REWARDS

Daniel 3:30 – *“Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to even higher positions in the province of Babylon.”* (New Living)

## 6. GOD WILL REWARD MY FAITH IN HEAVEN

1 Corinthians 3:10-14 – [10] *“Because of God's special favor to me, I have laid the foundation like an expert builder. Now others are building on it. But whoever is building on this foundation must be very careful. [11] For no one can lay any other foundation than the one we already have— Jesus Christ. [12] Now anyone who builds on that foundation may use gold, silver, jewels, wood, hay, or straw. [13] But there is going to come a time of testing at the judgment day to see what kind of work each builder has done. Everyone's work will be put through the fire to see whether or not it keeps its value. [14] If the building survives the fire, that builder will receive a reward.”* (New Living & NIV)

### **Prayer:**

Father, I want to be like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, I'm not going to worry about defending myself when I'm attacked. I'm going to remind myself You have the power to save me eternally and keep my faith intact no matter how big the problem. I know You are with me always even when I feel like You are distant. Like these three guys, even if You don't take me out of a problem I'm not going to serve the false gods of my culture. I know You are with me always, even to the end of the age. I'm expecting You to burn off the ropes that are tying me down – bad memories, misconceptions about people, and false beliefs. I want to be a stand-up kind of person like these guys. Lord, use my pain and problems to bring nonbelievers to You and give me a faith other people will want to imitate. I'm going to trust that I will be rewarded in heaven for my efforts here on earth. I'm going to trust You when I don't understand and stand up for biblical morals when it's unpopular. Use me as a part of Your plan in bringing other people to You. In Jesus's name. Amen.