**Daniel 3:1-24 and 3:90-100**

**Lesson 4**

**The Fiery Furnace**

Not all translations have the same chapter and verse numberings for chapter 3. Large blocks of prayers are inserted into the Septuagint or Greek versions of the Old Testament in the middle of this story. We will read the prayers of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego next week. If your Bible does not have 100 verses in chapter 3 you may want to consult the New American Bible Revised Edition online for this lesson.

1. **When did you feel closest to God this week? *Or* was there a verse or lesson from our reading of Daniel that you found insightful or inspiring this week?**
2. In chapter 2 Nebuchadnezzar acknowledges the power of Daniel’s God. **What at the beginning of this chapter** **suggests that this Babylonian king believes in many Gods, or that he and his gods are superior?** See Dan 3:1-6.

 **3:1-6**

1. **Why is it important to the king that *his gods* be more powerful than the God of the Jews?**
2. **Who is the fourth man in the fiery furnace with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego?** See Dan 3:47- 49 and Dan 3:91-92 in NAB or NABRE, in other versions see Dan 3:24-25.

**3:47-49** The flames rose forty-nine cubits above the furnace, and spread out, burning the Chaldeans nearby. But the angel of the Lord went down into the furnace with Azariah and his companions, drove the fiery flames out of the furnace and made the inside of the furnace as though a dew-laden breeze were blowing through it. (NAB)

**3: 91-92** King Nebuchadnezzar rose in hast and asked his nobles, “Did we not cast three men bound into the fire?” “Assuredly, O king,” they answered. “But,” he replied, “I see four men unfettered and unhurt, walking in the fire, and the fourth looks like a son of God.” (NAB)

1. Look for **symbolic** meaning. **In what ways were Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego saved or freed by God?** **How is this similar to our Christian understanding of salvation?** See vs 3:24, 3:49-50 above, 3:91-92 above, 3:94, and 3:97. (NAB)

**3:24** They walked about in the flames, singing to God and blessing the Lord.

**3:97** Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the province of Babylon.

1. King Nebuchadnezzar still believes in many gods at the end of this chapter. **How has his understanding of the God of Israel changed after the experience of the fiery furnace?** See Dan 3:95-100 and look for clues in your footnotes.

 **Daniel 3:95-100**

**95**Nebuchadnezzar exclaimed, “Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who sent his angel to deliver the servants that trusted in him; they disobeyed the royal command and yielded their bodies rather than serve or worship any god except their own God. **96**Therefore I decree for nations and peoples of every language that whoever blasphemes the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be cut to pieces and his house made into a refuse heap. For there is no other God who can rescue like this.” **97**Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the province of Babylon.

**98**[[h](#fen-NABRE-26052h)]King Nebuchadnezzar to the nations and peoples of every language, wherever they dwell on earth: May your peace abound! **99**It has seemed good to me to publish the signs and wonders which the Most High God has accomplished in my regard.

**100**How great are his signs, how mighty his wonders;
    his kingship is an everlasting kingship,
    and his dominion endures through all generations.