# Lesson 4 Daniel 3:1-23, 91-100Fiery Furnace

1. (Faith) Although in verse 95, Nebuchadnezzar sees the fourth man as an angel, the term “son of God” can mean an angel or the Second Person of the Holy Trinity. Prior to the Incarnation, God appeared to Abraham identified as one of three figures who were the Lord and two angels. (See Genesis 18:2, 17; 19:1) Jesus himself describes an encounter with Abraham.
Do you think the fourth man in the fire was Jesus, Our Savior prior to His Incarnation?

Daniel 3:91-93, 97

91 Then King Nebuchadnezzar was startled and rose in haste, asking his counselors,
 “Did we not cast three men bound into the fire?” “Certainly, O king,” they answered.

92 “But,” he replied, “I see four men unbound and unhurt, walking in the fire,
 and the fourth looks like a son of God.”

93 Then Nebuchadnezzar came to the opening of the white-hot furnace and called: “Shadrach, Meshach,
 and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out.”
 Thereupon Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out of the fire.

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.

Genesis 18:2, 17; 19:1

2 Looking up, he saw three men standing near him.

17 The LORD considered: Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do

19:1 The two angels reached Sodom in the evening

John 8:56-58

56 Abraham your father rejoiced to see my day; he saw it and was glad.

57 So the Jews said to him, “You are not yet fifty years old and you have seen Abraham?”

58 Jesus said to them, “Amen, amen, I say to you, before Abraham came to be, I AM.”

1. (Hope) In the words of Jesus in Matthew 16:24-25, by denying ourselves, we store up treasure in heaven.
How do you see Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego storing up treasure in heaven
by their faithfulness to God?

Daniel 3:17-18

17 If our God, whom we serve, can save us from the white-hot furnace and from your hands,
 O king, may he save us!

18 But even if he will not, you should know,
 O king, that we will not serve your god or worship the golden statue which you set up.”

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The Christian is not to "be ashamed of testifying to our Lord" (2 Tim 1:8) in deed and word.
Martyrdom is the supreme witness given to the truth of the faith.

Matthew 16:24-25

24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself,
 take up his cross, and follow me.

25 For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

1. (Love) Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego face the dilemma of martyrs throughout Jewish and Christian history: the permissibility of feigning the worship of a man or an idol for the purpose of preserving our lives.
What might be wrong with feigning the worship of a man or an idol? Consider the following texts.

Exodus 20:2-5

2 I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

3 You shall not have other gods beside me.

4 You shall not make for yourself an idol or a likeness of anything in the heavens
 above or on the earth below or in the waters beneath the earth;

5 you shall not bow down before them or serve them.

2 Maccabees 6:23-25

23 But he made up his mind in a noble manner, worthy of his years, the dignity of his advanced age,
 the merited distinction of his gray hair, and of the admirable life he had lived from childhood;
 and so he declared that above all he would be loyal to the holy laws given by God.
He told them to send him at once to the abode of the dead, explaining:

24 "At our age it would be unbecoming to make such a pretense;
 many young men would think the ninety-year-old Eleazar had gone over to an alien religion.

25 Should I thus dissimulate for the sake of a brief moment of life,
 they would be led astray by me, while I would bring shame and dishonor on my old age.

Matthew 18:6; Mark 9:42; Luke 17:2

"Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.