



GRACE SO AMAZING

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TO CONFRONT CONTEMPORARY HEAT

Dan. 3:8-30

Dan. 3:19 Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: *therefore* he spake, and commanded that they should **heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated.**

20 And he commanded **the most mighty men that *were* in his army** to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, *and* to cast *them* into the burning fiery furnace.

21 Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their *other* garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

22 **Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.**

Albuquerque has endured a recent heat wave the last couple of weeks which has been hotter than normal. Albuquerque spent three consecutive days in the triple-digits with one record high temperature of 104 degrees. For five days in a row, Roswell reached at least 110 degrees, setting a new record for the most consecutive days with a high temperature at or above 110, all while breaking record high temperatures each day. Consider the following facts:

100° Facts for the Albuquerque Area

- For the historical period 1897-2022*, the mercury has reached at least 100° in 72 of those 126 years, or **almost 60 percent** of the years.
- At the Sunport, 1939-2020, the mercury has reached at least 100° in 61 of 84 years, or **72 percent** of the years
- Since 1939, the mercury reached at least 100 degrees 255 times, for an **average 3 times** a year
- The hottest temperature ever recorded was **107°**, June 26, 1994
- The greatest number of consecutive 100° days was **nine** (June 22-30, 1980)
- The **earliest** date 100° or higher was reached in any year was **June 5, 2010** (max of 100°)
- The **latest** date 100° or higher was reached in any year was **September 5, 1979** (max of 100°)

https://www.weather.gov/abq/clifeatures_100degrees

While some in our area might find the heat very oppressive, how do you think such heat compares to that which Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego had to face when they were cast into the fiery furnace?

A brick kiln in this era would reach roughly 1832°F (1000°C) and it was made “seven times more” than normal. (Meaning 7x more fuel not 7x more temperature. If it meant literal temperature it would be 12,824°F which is 3000°F hotter than the surface of the sun. There was no way to measure exact temperature in these days so they are measuring heat by fuel input.) From a human perspective, there was no way for them to escape.

<https://www.nerdintheword.com/freedom-in-the-fire/>

❖ Nebuchadnezzar was full of fury, ordered his “most mighty men” to intensify the heat of the furnace and the heat killed his own men.

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20 And he commanded **the most mighty men that were in his army** to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, *and* to cast *them* into the burning fiery furnace.

21 Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their *other* garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

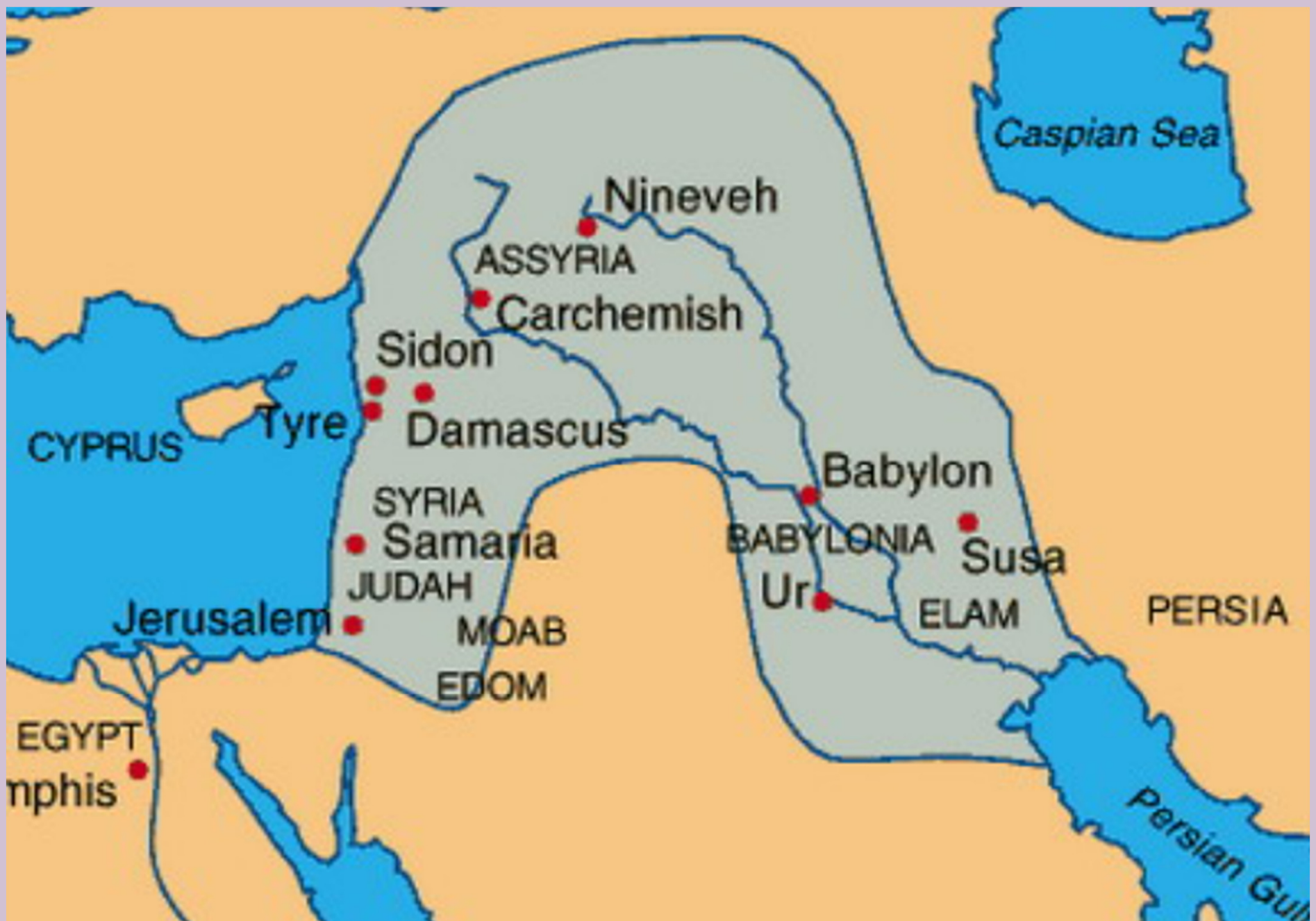
22 Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

- ❖ The whole incident of the fiery furnace began with the construction of a new political program.

I. WHEN THE HEAT ARRIVES, FAITHFUL BELIEVERS WILL NOT BOW, 3:1-12

A. The Construction of the Image, 3:1

Dan. 3:1 Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height *was* threescore cubits, *and* the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.



- ❖ Nebuchadnezzar's new plan focused upon everyone worshipping a 90' x 9' image.

<https://www.britam.org/Kings/2Kings24.html>

B. The Consecration of the Image, 3:2-7

Dan. 3:2 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

3 Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

4 Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded,
O people, nations, and languages,

5 *That* at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet,
flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of
musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that
Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up:

6 And whoso falleth not down and worshippingeth shall
the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery
furnace.

7 Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the
sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and
all kinds of musick, all the people, the nations, and the
languages, fell down *and* worshipped the golden image
that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

❖ Nebuchadnezzar ordered an orchestra to play their instruments as a signal for his decree that all the politicians and people “fall down and worship the golden image.”

C. The Contempt for the Image, 3:8-12

Dan. 3:8 Wherefore at that time certain Chaldeans came near, and accused the Jews.

9 They spake and said to the king Nebuchadnezzar, O king, live for ever.

10 Thou, O king, hast made a decree, that every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, shall fall down and worship the golden image:

11 And whoso falleth not down and worshipping, *that* he should be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

12 **There are certain Jews whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon**, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; these men, O king, have not regarded thee: they serve not thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

- ❖ In the midst of the celebration of Nebuchadnezzar's new plan, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego expressed contempt for the image, and their rebellion was reported.

- ❖ Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were bureaucrats appointed by Nebuchadnezzar (3:12) over provinces in Babylon, then later attacked for their testimonies.

II. WHEN THE HEAT ACCENTUATES FAITHFULNESS, BELIEVERS WILL NOT BUDGE, 3:13-18

A. The Rage of the Emperor, 3:13-15

Dan. 3:13 Then Nebuchadnezzar in *his* rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Then they brought these men before the king.

14 Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, *Is it true*, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, **do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?**

15 Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made; *well*: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and **who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?**

- ❖ Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego would not capitulate to Nebuchadnezzar's new law.
- ❖ Nebuchadnezzar, in *his* rage and fury, confronted the Hebrews, warning them to “fall down and worship the image which I have made,” or else “be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.”
- ❖ The confrontation was spiritual warfare – “...**who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?**”

Eph. 6:16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all **the fiery darts of the wicked.**

B. The Resolve of the Exploited, 3:16-18

Dan. 3:16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we *are* not careful to answer thee in this matter.

17 If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver *us* out of thine hand, O king.

18 But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

- ❖ Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were prepared to trust God for deliverance; however, God chose to do it.
- ❖ They were resolved NOT to worship Nebuchadnezzar's god.

III. WHEN THE HEAT ATTACKS WITH FLAMES, BELIEVERS WILL NOT BURN, 3:19-30

A. Believers Endure the Flames of Persecution, 3:19-23

1.The King's Fury, 3:19-20

Dan. 3:19 Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: *therefore* he spake, and commanded that they should **heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated.**

20 And he commanded **the most mighty men that were in his army** to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, *and* to cast *them* into the burning fiery furnace.

- ❖ Nebuchadnezzar turned in rage against his appointees.
- ❖ Nebuchadnezzar, “full of fury,” heated the furnace, had the Hebrews bound and cast into the flaming furnace.

2. The King's Furnace, 3:21-23

Dan. 3:21 Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their *other* garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

22 Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

23 And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

- ❖ Details of the incident emphasize several aspects:
 - ✦ The furnace was “exceeding hot” and “the fire slew those” “most mighty men that *were* in his army;”
 - ✦ Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were fully clothed;
 - ✦ Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego “...fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.”
- ❖ Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were just ordinary men with extraordinary faith.

B. Believers Embrace the Fuel of Preservation, 3:24-28

1. By the Presence of God, 3:24-25

Dan. 3:24 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, *and* spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king.

25 He answered and said, **Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.**

- ❖ Nebuchadnezzar's fit of rage quickly turned to astonished confusion. His plan of annihilation collapsed into deliverance of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.
- ❖ Nebuchadnezzar did not see three men bound and burning, but four men foot loosed and free.
- ❖ The Hebrews' fiery trial resulted in special fellowship with "the Son of God."

Psa. 66:12 Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; **we went through fire and through water: but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy *place*.**

Isa. 43:2 When thou passest through the waters, **I *will be with thee***; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: **when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.** (Heb. 13:5)

2. By the Power of God, 3:26-28

Dan. 3:26 Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, *and* spake, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, **ye servants of the most high God**, come forth, and come *hither*. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, came forth of the midst of the fire.

27 And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies **the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them.**

28 *Then* Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, **Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God.**

❖ Nebuchadnezzar was overwhelmed at the power of God!

❖ God so thoroughly delivered Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego that not a hair was singed, nor their clothing burnt, nor even the smell of smoke was upon them.

❖ Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego's faith was activated!

Heb. 11:34a “**Quenched the violence of fire...**”

C. Believers Enjoy the Fellowship of Promotion,
3:29-30

1.The King Praises God's Person, 3:29

Dan. 3:29 Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against **the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego**, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: **because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort.**

❖ Nebuchadnezzar recognized and respected God's interference.

2. The King Praises God's People, 3:30

Dan. 3:30 Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, in the province of Babylon.

- ❖ Nebuchadnezzar recognized and respected the faith of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego as the “servants of the most high God.”

Summary

- ❖ Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were bureaucrats appointed by Nebuchadnezzar (3:12) over provinces in Babylon, then later attacked for their testimonies.
- ❖ The chief lesson from the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego is that, as believers, we will never be able to bring the world to Christ by becoming like it.
- ❖ As did these three men, so should we in revealing to the world a higher power, a greater purpose, and a superior morality, than the world in which we live.
- ❖ If we are put before the fiery furnace, we can reveal the One who can deliver us from it. Remember the powerful, yet comforting words, of the apostle Peter:

1 Pet. 4:12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning **the fiery trial** which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

- ❖ The only thing they lost in the fire was the things that bound them.
- ❖ God had allowed them to go through the fiery trial and yet, it was the trial that freed them from their bonds.
- ❖ How will your story end?

- ❖ Will people know about your God?
- ❖ Will they tell others of how they saw God deliver you?
- ❖ Will they see you walking with faith through fiery trials?
- ❖ And most importantly, will you choose to find freedom in the fire?

Conclusion

Jas. 1:2 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

3 Knowing *this*, that **the trying of your faith** worketh patience.

4 But let patience have *her* perfect work, that **ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.**

5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.