

SHARE THE BIBLE LESSON  
**WEEK 34**

## God protects Daniel's friends

Daniel 3:1-30



### DAY 1

*Nebuchadnezzar commanded everyone to worship his gods • Daniel 3:1-7*

#### READ

Daniel 3:1-7

#### EXPLAIN

**The truth of Daniel 3:1-7**

The Bible tells you to submit to your human authorities (Rom 13:1), but what if your human authority commands you to disobey God? Do what Daniel's friends did. Nebuchadnezzar had declared that God is great (Dan 2:47), but he wasn't yet willing to worship God alone (3:1). In fact, he wanted everyone else to worship idols with him, or else be thrown into the fiery furnace (3:6). But while everyone bowed low in worship, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego stood tall. They knew that God alone is God (Deut 6:4), that God demands the whole of our devotion (6:5), and that He alone is to be worshiped (Exod 20:3-4). So they obeyed God instead of man (Acts 5:29). That is what you should do too, but even when you must disobey human government, you must still do so with honor and respect (1 Pet 2:17). And you must be all the more careful to obey when obedience does not require sin. Otherwise, who will believe your testimony (1 Pet 2:20)? Instead of seeing a person devoted to God above all, they will only see a person with a rebellious attitude.

#### ASK

1. What did Nebuchadnezzar build?  
*A statue that was 90 feet tall.*
2. Who was at the dedication of Nebuchadnezzar's statue?  
*All the officials of his kingdom.*
3. What did King Nebuchadnezzar demand all his officials to do?  
*He demanded that all of them worship the image he had built.*
4. Why didn't Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego obey?  
*They chose to obey God rather than man.*

#### DISCUSS

1. Do you think it was hard for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to stand when everyone else bowed down? Why is peer pressure powerful and dangerous?
2. Is it possible to disobey an earthly authority without a rebellious attitude? If you had to disobey an earthly authority right now, would it be clear to people that you are doing so for God and not just to be a rebel?

## DAY 2

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to worship  
Nebuchadnezzar's gods • Daniel 3:8–18

### READ

Daniel 3:8–18

### EXPLAIN

#### The truth of Daniel 3:8–18

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to bow, but would they give in when threatened with painful death? They were jealously accused by some of the Chaldeans, who were wise men of Babylonian heritage (Dan 3:12). Nebuchadnezzar was furious. How could these foreigners refuse to worship the gods who had conquered God's people by destroying Jerusalem? But Nebuchadnezzar had not yet understood that God is the "God of gods and the Lord of kings" (2:47). He did not realize that kings and nations are in God's hands—even his own victory over Jerusalem had been planned by God (Deut 28:45–57; Isa 39:5–7). In self-exalting pride, Nebuchadnezzar set himself against the God of gods. That was a foolish mistake, for God crushes the proud (Isa 13:11). But Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego knew God's power. So not even the smell of smoke and the sight of flames weakened their loyalty to Him. They depended fully on God and trusted His power to save (Heb 7:25). But they also trusted that God's will was best, even if He chose not to save (Rom 12:2).

### ASK

1. Who accused Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego of disobeying the king's command?  
*Some jealous Chaldeans, wise men of Babylonian heritage.*
2. What did Nebuchadnezzar say to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego?  
*That if they did not worship his gods they would be thrown into the fiery furnace.*
3. What did Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego say to the king?  
*That their God was able to deliver them from the fiery furnace, but even if He didn't save them, they still wouldn't worship idols.*

### DISCUSS

1. How should you respond to suffering (Rom 5:1–5; 1 Pet 4:13)?
2. Describe the last time you were able to demonstrate your allegiance to Christ.  
Parents: as appropriate, discuss with your children areas where they can expect to suffer for the truth (evolution, homosexuality, etc.).

## DAY 3

God demonstrated His power by protecting Shadrach, Meshach,  
and Abednego • Daniel 3:19–30

### READ

Daniel 3:19–30

### EXPLAIN

#### The truth of Daniel 3:19–30

God proved His great power to save. God could not be stopped by Nebuchadnezzar's hatred for the three Jews for their faith. He could not be stopped by the super hot flames (Dan 3:19). Even though the scorching flames instantly killed the soldiers (3:22), the three Jews were unharmed! Not only that, but they enjoyed the company of one "like a son of the gods" (3:25). This man may have been the pre-incarnate Christ or

an angel of God. You also, if you belong to Christ, can enjoy His presence through any hardship, because Christ is always with you (Matt 28:20), and the Holy Spirit is present to encourage, bless, and sustain you (Ps 139:7–10; John 14:16–17; 1 Cor 3:16; 1 Pet 4:14). God's power to save showed Nebuchadnezzar that He was "the Most High God" (Dan 3:26). He praised the three men and declared that the Most High God is trustworthy (3:28) and powerful to save (3:29), unlike any idol. Nebuchadnezzar even commanded that all his subjects respect and honor God. Have you put your trust in God, who alone is able to save you?

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**ASK** 

1. What was the furnace like?  
*Very hot.*
2. Did Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego burn up in the fire?  
*They were thrown in, but they did not burn.*
3. Who protected Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego?  
*God. He sent His angel to protect the men.*
3. What did the king do when he saw how God protected the three men?  
*The king praised God for protecting them.*

**DISCUSS** 

1. Did God have to save Daniel's friends? What does it show you about God that He did choose to save them?
2. Is it enough to believe in and admire God's great power? What did Nebuchadnezzar still lack (Dan 4:37; Jas 4:6)? Are you like Nebuchadnezzar?

**DAY 4**

*By faith Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego quenched the power of fire • Hebrews 11:34*

**READ** 

Hebrews 11:32-40

**EXPLAIN** **The truth of Hebrews 11:34**

What does it mean that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego quenched the power of fire by faith (Heb 11:34)? Was it something they did that put out the flames? Not exactly, because faith is recognizing that there isn't anything you can do. Faith is admitting that God alone is able to save. Faith is being convinced that He can do it (Heb 11:1), and it depends on Him alone. And that is exactly what these three men did. They were convinced that God is always with His people, even in fiery trials. They embraced God's promise to Israel: "When you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you" (Isa 43:2). So they exited the furnace without even smelling like smoke. God never guarantees that you will be rescued from physical suffering or death, but you can still live by faith like Daniel's friends. Why? Because if your faith is in God, then no matter what happens in this life, heaven is guaranteed (Phil 1:21-30; 3:10-11, 14, 20-21). And no matter what trouble you face, God is always with you (Pss 9:9; 37:39).

**ASK** 

1. How did Daniel's friends overcome the fire?  
*By faith: they depended entirely on God and were confident that He could save them.*
2. How was their rescue clearly a work of God?  
*God supernaturally protected them from the fire, even guarding their bodies from the smell of smoke.*
3. What truth can help you have faith like them?  
*God gives heaven to those who believe. God is always with those who believe, no matter the trouble.*

**DISCUSS** 

1. What is your "stronghold" during times of trouble (Ps 9:9; 37:39)?
2. Have you recently experienced a trial or hardship? What has sustained you?

# DAY 5

Jesus is always with His people • John 14:16–17

## READ

John 14:12–20

## EXPLAIN

### The truth of John 14:16–17

If Jesus ascended into heaven long ago, how can we say that He is with us? Jesus explained this the night before His death. His disciples were upset over the coming loss of their Lord, because they loved Him deeply and desperately relied upon Him. Even though His own death was coming soon, Jesus selflessly ministered to the needs of His disciples. He graciously promised to provide for all their needs (John 14:13), and He would do so by sending another Helper exactly like Himself (14:16). This “Helper,” the Holy Spirit, would remain with them forever. He would take Jesus’ place, empowering the disciples to accomplish His work. He is the “Spirit of truth” (14:17), the source who communicates the truth to His people (16:12–15). The world cannot see Him or know Him. They failed to recognize Jesus (1:10), and will fail to recognize His Spirit. However, ever since Pentecost, all Christians are personally and permanently indwelt by God’s Spirit (Acts 2; Rom 8:9; 1 Cor 12:13). So if you have the Spirit in you, then Jesus Himself is present with you too (John 14:20).

## ASK

1. Who is the “Helper”?  
*The Holy Spirit.*
2. Why is the Holy Spirit also called the “Spirit of truth”?  
*He is the source who communicates the truth to Christians.*
3. Why can’t the world receive the Holy Spirit?  
*The world doesn’t see Him or know Him.*
4. What did Jesus say would change about the way the disciples experienced the ministry of the Holy Spirit?  
*The Holy Spirit had dwelt with them but would soon dwell in them.*

## DISCUSS

1. Is there anywhere God’s Spirit is not present (Ps 139:7–10)?
2. One of the reasons God has given His Spirit is to empower Christians for service. What will you do this week to serve our great God? How can you tell the difference between serving by the Spirit’s power and serving by your own strength?

## NEXT WEEK

### God humbles Nebuchadnezzar

*Daniel 4:1–37*

