

## LESSON 7

### UNCOMPROMISING FAITH

**CENTRAL TRUTH:** By faith, a Christian can stand firm in the face of challenges.

**Memory Verse:** “But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty that we will serve your gods or worship the image of gold and have set up.” - Daniel 3:18

### LESSON TEXT

#### Daniel 3:4-6, 12-18, 21-28

#### Daniel 3:

**4** Then the herald loudly proclaimed, “Nations and peoples of every language, this is what you are commanded to do:

**5** As soon as you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipe and all kinds of music, you must fall down and worship the image of gold that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up.

**6** Whoever does not fall down and worship will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace.”

**12** But there are some Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon—Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego—who pay no attention to you, Your Majesty. They neither serve your gods nor worship the image of gold you have set up.”

**13** Furious with rage, Nebuchadnezzar summoned Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. So these men were brought before the king,

**14** and Nebuchadnezzar said to them, “Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the image of gold I have set up?

**15** Now when you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipe and all kinds of music, if you are ready to fall down and worship the image I made, very good. But if you do not worship it, you will be thrown immediately into a blazing furnace. Then what god will be able to rescue you from my hand?”

**16** Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to him, “King Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter.

**17** If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us<sup>[a]</sup> from Your Majesty’s hand.

**18** But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.”

**21** So these men, wearing their robes, trousers, turbans and other clothes, were bound and thrown into the blazing furnace.

**22** The king's command was so urgent and the furnace so hot that the flames of the fire killed the soldiers who took up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego,<sup>23</sup> and these three men, firmly tied, fell into the blazing furnace.

**24** Then King Nebuchadnezzar leaped to his feet in amazement and asked his advisers, "Weren't there three men that we tied up and threw into the fire?" They replied, "Certainly, Your Majesty."

**25** He said, "Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth looks like a son of the gods."

**26** Nebuchadnezzar then approached the opening of the blazing furnace and shouted, "Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out! Come here!"

So Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego came out of the fire,

**27** and the satraps, prefects, governors and royal advisers crowded around them. They saw that the fire had not harmed their bodies, nor was a hair of their heads singed; their robes were not scorched, and there was no smell of fire on them.

**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.

## INTRODUCTION

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego went from being confidants to the king to become the objects of his wrath because they would not compromise their faith in God. It is difficult to conceive of circumstances significantly worse than what these three Hebrew men went through. Like them, we may be challenged to compromise our faith in God. In this week's study, we will look for ways to relate the experiences of these men to those we face so that we can stand firm in the face of challenges as they did.

## LESSON

An idol does not have to be a statue or image. It can be anything that demands our allegiance and call us to compromise our worship of God. Peer pressure beckons us to worship at the feet of fame, self-indulgence, materialism and promiscuity. When we do, we compromise our

commitment to God and put ourselves in spiritual jeopardy. If we choose to serve God without compromise by living according to his standards, we will be challenged.

After hearing the offer of the king to give them a second chance, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego told the king they did not have to even think about their answer (**Daniel 3:16**). They had not bowed to his image, and they would not bow to his image (Daniel 3:18). These three Hebrew men did what they did because it was right, not because it was expedient. There is a point where the believer must trust in the Sovereignty of God. Faith allows believers to trust God no matter what God does. He does not spare us from some trials, but often He chooses to take us through the storms of life. We can trust Him either way, for He will see us through by His grace.

As the king observed the three young men in the fiery furnace, a look of astonishment replaced his angry mood (**Daniel 3:24**). God honoured the faith of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and saved them from physical death. It was obvious to all observers that the God of the Jews was more powerful than the king of Babylon and that God even possessed power over the forces of nature. Like the three Hebrew men, we can be most effective in our service to others and to God when we stand firm in our commitment to God. By taking a firm stand to honour God, we will be testifying to the world that the Lord can be trusted to be there for us in all circumstances.

### LIFE APPLICATION

Faithfulness through trials is one of the hallmarks of the Christian life. The way of the world is to compromise. For the people of God, this is not a viable option. The God we serve has given us great promises based on His Faithfulness to us, and ours to Him.

### ----- DAILY BIBLE READING -----

- Monday – Resolve to Remain Faithful (Genesis 39:2-12)
- Tuesday – Serve God wholeheartedly (Deut. 10:12-20)
- Wednesday – God Fights for us (2 Chron 20:14-20)
- Thursday – Determined Faith (Matthew 15:21-28)
- Friday – Faith in a Storm (Acts 27:13-26)
- Saturday – Stand in Faith (Gal. 5:1-6)