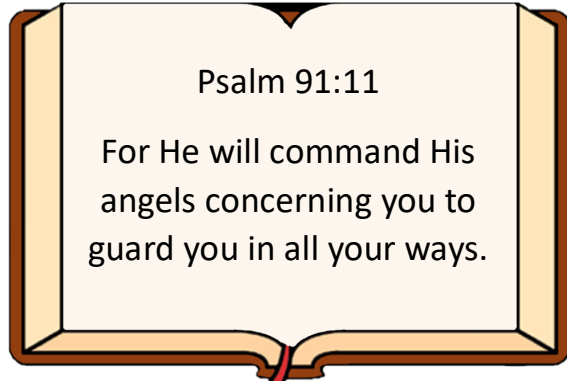


Weekly Memory Verse



Who will give angels command over you? _____

What will the angels do? _____

God Saves Daniel's Friends from Burning



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One day the king decided to build a very large statue. It is possible that it looked like the statue Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream, but we really don't know. The workmen placed it a short distance outside the city of Babylon. It was made of pure gold, which means it must have been very beautiful and very expensive. It was ninety feet tall, about the height of an eight-story building. It was nine feet wide. What a huge and awesome statue it must have been!

When the statue was finished, the king requested all his officials and leaders to come to a special ceremony to dedicate it. All his important leaders came. As they gathered in front of the great statue, the man who made announcements for the king spoke in a loud voice, "Everyone listen! This is what the king commands you to do. When you hear the musical instruments begin to play, you must bow down and worship the gold statue that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. Anyone who refuses to do this will be immediately thrown into a blazing furnace and burned to death."

Because the people were afraid of the king and knew he would keep his word, they all bowed before the statue when they heard the music."

But there was one problem! Not everyone bowed down before the statue! There in the middle of all the people bowing to the ground before the statue were three men standing straight and tall! Who would dare defy the king? Who would choose to die instead of obeying the king? It was Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego—Daniel's three friends.

Then some of the wise men went straight to the king with their news. "O king, live forever!" they said. "You commanded everyone to bow down to your statue when they heard the music play. Some men of Judah whom you made important officers in Babylon do not worship your gods. Now they have not paid attention to your order and have not bowed down to your statue."

When Nebuchadnezzar heard this, he was furious. At once he called for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to appear before him. He said to them, "Is it true that you do not serve my gods or worship my gold statue? I will give you one more chance to obey. This time if you do not bow down and worship the golden statue when you hear the music, you will be thrown immediately into the blazing furnace. Then what god will be able to save you?"

God gave them courage to tell the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves to you. You can throw us into the blazing furnace. The God we serve can save us from being burned. But even if He chooses not to do so, we want you to know, O king, we will not serve your gods. We will not worship the gold statue you have set up." They knew they could trust God completely. They really loved God and were willing to die for Him. If that happened, they knew they would live forever with God in heaven.

Circle the correct answer

King Nebuchadnezzar was (*angry, surprised, annoyed*) with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

The Bible says King Nebuchadnezzar was furious and his whole attitude towards them changed. How dare they disobey him! He gave orders for the furnace to be fired up seven times hotter than it usually was. This guaranteed that the men would die instantly in the fire. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego remained true to God and trusted Him to take care of them, no matter what happened.

The king, wanting this done quickly, watched as the three young men were tied up and thrown into the blazing fire. The fire was so hot; the flames of the fire killed the soldiers as they threw the men into the fire.

Then King Nebuchadnezzar looked with amazement at what he was seeing. He asked, "Didn't we tie up three men and throw them into the furnace?"

"Yes, O king," his advisers replied.

Stepping closer, King Nebuchadnezzar exclaimed, "Look! I see four men in there. They are untied and walking around. They don't even look burned. The fourth man looks like a son of the gods." The Bible doesn't tell us who the fourth person was. Some people think it was the Lord Jesus Christ. It may have been an angel. In either case, God protected Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in that blazing furnace. He showed He was in control of everything, even the fire!

The king walked toward the opening of the blazing furnace. As he stood there, he called out to the men inside, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out."

The men came walking out. The men had no burns or singed hair on them. Their robes weren't burned, and they didn't even smell like smoke! The king and all those standing around had never seen anything like it.

King Nebuchadnezzar recognized that God had rescued Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He said, "Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego who sent His angel to rescue His servants. They trusted in Him and refused to obey my command. They were willing to die rather than worship any other god except their own God. So now I am making this law: The people of any nation who says anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego will be punished with death and their houses will be torn down. No other god can save like this."

Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to higher positions in Babylon. But more importantly, by remaining true to God, they honored God before all those who ruled over Babylon and showed them that He is in control of everything.

Circle the correct answer.

The King saw (3, 4, 5) men in the fire.