

# But God

Week 3 – Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: Daniel 3

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Review:

God loves to show off His love.

We are in a series called “But God.” History is full of moments where it looked like all was lost and the love of God stepped in.

I believe this is still true today. I believe it is true for you and true for me.

Over the last few weeks we have covered:

How do we wait well? Week one.

The power and importance of your private life. Week two.

I would encourage you to go look them up at

<https://www.encountertrinity.com/messages/#but-god>.

This week we will look at Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from Daniel 3

The book of Daniel is both a promise and a pattern that displays the nature of God and the nature of humans. God keeps working to restore. People given freedom, power and time become cruel and sinful. We don’t just need rescued financially or physically; our hearts need rescued.

It was 597 B.C.

The Jewish people had built a fairly powerful little empire. Jehoiakim king of Judah, king of the Jews.

*Rabbinical literature describes Jehoiakim as a godless tyrant who committed atrocious sins and crimes. He is portrayed as living in incestuous relations with his mother, daughter-in-law, and stepmother, and was in the habit of murdering men, whose wives he then violated and whose property he seized. He also had tattooed his body. (Wiki)*

When representatives of God become beacons of sin it’s time for God to step in.

God allows Babylon to take his own people down.

The Book of Daniel is right after Babylon besieged Jerusalem and took prisoners, or “spoils” of war. Three of them were Daniel and three of his friends Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Imagine being taken from your home. Imagine being taken from your family. Imagine losing your freedom, identity and even your name because of the sin of someone else.

As these young godly men were being removed from God's Promised Land, they didn't realize the promises of God were going with them.

There are many amazing stories but today I would love to take a look at one. In the Plain of Dura in the province of Babylon king Nebuchadnezzar built a huge idol of gold. He asks that all, especially the Jews, bow to this image. This is way more than just bowing down, it is giving into the Babylonian ways of life and submitting to their value systems. Daniel and his friends, with a kind spirit, refuse and found themselves facing death by being thrown into a furnace.

Daniel 3:16-25

*16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. 17 If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. 18 But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up."*

*19 Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with fury, and the expression of his face was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He ordered the furnace heated seven times more than it was usually heated. 20 And he ordered some of the mighty men of 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 cloaks, their tunics, their hats, and their other garments, and they were thrown into the burning fiery furnace. 22 Because the king's order was urgent and the furnace overheated, the flame of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. 23 And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell bound into the burning fiery furnace.*

*24 Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and rose up in haste. He declared to his counselors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the fire?" They answered and said to the king, "True, O king." 25 He answered and said, "But I see four men unbound, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods."*

- In the midst of the human Babylonian king showing off, the true king shows up.
- All through the book we see that these men stand for truth with kindness.
  - Christian rebellion isn't done with weapons and hatred, it's done with a heart of kindness and even submission to the consequences.
- The "But God" is really powerful because it is also a "But if God does not..."
  - We know on this side of history God saved them, but they didn't know how it would turn out. They chose faithfulness.
  - How do they do this? How do we do this? We must remember the best life is the next life. Nothing, no person, no sickness, no poverty, no social system can steal the ultimate promises of God for His people.

## Where is Jesus in this?

- There are so many ways He could have saved them, but he chose to get in the fire with them.
  - He did this with them, He did it with the incarnation and He will do it with you.
  - If God doesn't do what you want, He will do what is best. He truly loves you!

## What does this mean for you?

- You are not alone. Jesus is incarnate. He comes into your situations.
- No one can steal the greatest promises of God.
- When you feel obligated to stand against something you must do it in a right way.

Next Steps: If this sermon was for you say, "This is for me!" in the comments. I want to pray for you. If you need to follow Jesus please message us. Consider sharing this with a friend.

## Questions:

1. Are there any idols I bow down to today?
2. Am I committed to Christ, His ways and His rhythms even when it is inconvenient?
3. In what area do I need the presence of God to be made manifest?

After you answer these, I want you to pray for each other.