

PROPHETS & PROMISES: READERS' THEATRE

DANIEL'S FRIENDS AND THE FIERY FURNACE

Daniel 3 (NIRV)

*This Readers' Theatre Script is a compilation of various scripture quotes from Daniel 3.
The quotes are taken directly from the New International Reader's Version.*

Teacher assigns roles and puts everyone in places for scene. Nonreaders and younger students often prefer to dress up and act out each sentence as teacher and assistant reads all parts. Older, more proficient readers may want to read parts.

1. **DANIEL** (the narrator)
2. **KING NEBUCHADNEZZAR** (neb -buk -kad- nezzar) with crown, throne
3. **SHADRACH** (shad-rack)
4. **MESHACH** (me-shack)
5. **ABEDNEGO** (ab-ed-neg-go)
6. **THE HERALD** (the king's messenger)
(divide remaining children into three groups)
7. **ASTROLOGERS** (those who study planets and stars—group 1)
8. **STRONGEST SOLDIERS** (group 2)
9. **ROYAL ADVISORS** (group 3)

Scene:

The scene takes place in Babylon and is arranged as follows:

- *furnace: (small camping tent or sheet tent)*
- *1 throne (chair) facing the furnace*

[DANIEL] King Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold, ninety feet high and nine feet wide. He then summoned the satraps, prefects, governors, advisers, treasurers, judges, magistrates and all the other provincial officials to come to the dedication of the image he had set up.

[THE HERALD] This is what you are commanded to do, O peoples, nations and men of every language: As soon as you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music, you must fall down and worship the image of gold that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. Whoever does not fall down and worship will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace.

[THE ASTROLOGERS] O king, live forever! You have issued a decree, O king, 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, O king. They neither serve your gods nor worship the image of gold you have set up.

[KING NEBUCHADNEZZAR] Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the image of gold I have set up? 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?

[SHADRACH] O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter.

[MESHACH] If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and He will rescue us from your hand, O king.

[ABEDNEGO] But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.

[DANIEL] *(Strongest soldiers turn up furnace, and bring the three men to the king.)*

Then Nebuchadnezzar was furious with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and his attitude toward them changed. He ordered the furnace heated seven times hotter than usual and commanded some of the strongest soldiers in his army to tie them up and throw them into the blazing furnace. The fire killed the soldiers who took up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and these three men, firmly tied, fell into the blazing furnace.

[KING NEBUCHADNEZZAR] *(Leaps to his feet in amazement)* Weren't there three men that we tied up and threw into the fire?

[ROYAL ADVISORS] Certainly, O king.

[KING NEBUCHADNEZZAR] Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth looks like a son of the gods. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out! Come here!

[DANIEL] So Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego came out of the fire, 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.

[KING NEBUCHADNEZZAR] 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. No other god can save in this way.

THE END