

Who is able?

Daniel 3

The power to harm

Who or what has the power to harm us and the ones we love?

Who or what can protect us?

Key people in this story

King Nebuchadnezzar

Supreme ruler of the Babylonian empire, ~600 BC

He just had a dream about a statue (chapter 2)

Gold, silver, bronze, iron, baked clay; Kingdom after kingdom, then replaced by God's kingdom

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego

Young Jewish men who were captured and then forced into service for the king

Daniel 3

1-7: The king commanded everyone to worship the statue he set up—and everyone did!

The threat of death by fire was convincing!

8-23: Conflict between the king and the God of the Hebrews

King

“What god will be able to rescue you from my hand?”

In other words: serve me, and I'll protect you

Jewish men

“The God we serve is able to deliver us, and he will”

“Even if he does not”, we are still **His** servants

24-27: God delivered His servants THROUGH the flames

The king realized these 3 men were God's servants, not his

God's promise

“When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze.” *Isaiah 43:2*

28-30: The king bowed to the God of the Hebrews

“They were willing to give up their lives rather than serve any god except their own God”

“No other God can save in this way”

“For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.” The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.” *Romans 8:14-16*

The Big Idea

God rescues His children in Christ from or through every crisis and threat and power

What traps people like us?

sin & death

“What god will be able to rescue us from these troubles?”

Jesus Christ, who conquered sin and death

“For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” *Romans 8:38*



What we know about God

God can do far more than we can imagine

“Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.”

Ephesians 3:20-21

He does not withhold good from His children

“What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?” *Romans 8:31-32*
Whatever we don’t receive, He is working together for a greater (future) good

His wisdom is vastly beyond our own

“Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!” *Romans 11:33*
So we trust Him even when we can’t understand His wisdom

Application

Worship the God who is greater than every other power

Worshiping or trusting anything less is so foolish!

We bow to the Creator of life, the Judge of all creation, and the One who will make all things new

These 3 knew whom they served

Trust Him fully

Where did they meet God?

We can trust Him even for the courage to follow Him

“Such confidence we have through Christ before God. Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God. He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.” *2 Corinthians 3:4-6*

Entering the flames

When the 3 friends were in the flames...

God was present with them in the flames

Jesus entered the flames for us already

He died on the cross in our place

Then He rose again, victorious over sin and death

Since our Savior conquered death, nothing can harm us when we are with Him!

So He invites us to follow Him...

Reflection Questions for later today or this week...

1. What powers or problems are threatening you and the people you love today? Or tomorrow?
2. Have you encountered God amid life’s troubles? If so, what was it like? What stories can you tell about the God who is present with us?
3. 2 Corinthians 3:4-6 says that our confidence and competence are not to be found in ourselves. Rather, we find it in God. What does that mean? What is it like?
4. King Nebuchadnezzar wanted everyone to know that there is a god who can deliver, even from the power of the king and even from death. What can you do to help others know about our Savior, Jesus Christ, who has conquered sin and death, and who invites us to experience that victory with Him? How can we do that together?