

# Daniel 3:19-20

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/dan/dan-3/daniel-319-20/>

*Nebuchadnezzar is full of rage that Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego will not worship his idol. He orders their execution in the fire. In an expression of his rage, he orders the furnace to be extra fiery and for his best soldiers to take the prisoners to their death.*

Nebuchadnezzar once again reacts negatively toward Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. In v. 13, he showed “rage and anger” when he learned that they had refused to worship his golden statue. He arrested them and offered them a final chance to save their lives by bowing to the golden statue. They refused again, claiming that they believed their God would rescue them, and that even if they died, they were not men who worshipped idols. They only worship the God of Israel; not Babylonian idols or statues of gold.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego’s permanent conviction against idolatry is met with *wrath* by the king. He is *filled with* it, and *his facial expression is altered* toward his Jewish subjects. His face is twisted with his wrath; he is outraged by their defiance and has decided they will be thrown into the fiery furnace. He offered them the opportunity to save themselves, they refused, and now he is compelled to make good on his threat to execute them. They will be burned alive.

His response is to give *orders* to his servants to *heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated*. This is unnecessary and absurd, yet it is a visible show of the king’s outrage. Nebuchadnezzar’s flair for the dramatic is also shown by his command that *certain valiant warriors* from *his army* should *tie up* Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego to *cast them* into the fiery furnace. Three men who have accepted their death sentence without protest could reasonably be escorted to the gallows by any group of soldiers, but to display his anger further, Nebuchadnezzar has his mightiest soldiers carry out the deed.

The fanatical pride and vainglory of the king is obvious throughout this passage: he creates a 90-foot-tall golden statue (possibly in his own image), he orders a substantial part of the ruling class of the Babylonian province to

come see it, he has an enormous orchestra of all kinds of instruments play a showy song to prompt his rulers to worship his created image, he decrees a disturbing punishment for disobedience through death by fire, and now that the king has the opportunity to enact this punishment, he demands the fire be seven times hotter, and that only the strongest warriors carry the lawbreakers to their doom. Everything Nebuchadnezzar does is loud, dominating, excessive, and entirely for the purpose of making others fear and worship him.

### **Biblical Text:**

**<sup>19</sup> Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with wrath, and his facial expression was altered toward Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. He answered by giving orders to heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated. <sup>20</sup> He commanded certain valiant warriors who *were* in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego in order to cast *them* into the furnace of blazing fire.**