

# Daniel 3:8-12

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/dan/dan-3/daniel-38-12/>

*Political rivals of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego inform the king that the three Jewish subjects have not worshipped the golden statue. Nor have these three men ever worshipped any of Nebuchadnezzar's gods.*

The men who inform on Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego are specified as *certain Chaldeans*, who are targeting the Jewish immigrants. They are likely political rivals, smelling an advantage to be gained. Perhaps it is jealousy or prejudice that motivates the Chaldeans.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego are Jewish slaves captured in war, yet they have thrived in Babylon. They were educated in the king's house and served there; whenever the king asked for their counsel, "he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters that were in all his kingdom" ([Daniel 1:20](#)). *The Chaldeans* are sometimes translated as 'astrologers' (kaśdā'īn); they probably belong to this class of magicians who have been chastised by the king as failures in Chapter 1 & 2. Although Daniel saves their lives when he recites and interprets the king's dream, he also makes them look bad. These Jewish foreign captives excel beyond and outdo the Chaldean astrologers. Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego's influence and prominence in Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom has steadily increased. Perhaps these particular Chaldeans might have had enough, and see an opportunity to eliminate some competition.

*For this reason at that time* refers to the fact that everyone was complying with the command to worship the idol, but, as will be revealed, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego did not obey, bow, or worship. The certain Chaldeans were watching for this, probably, and saw the three Jews resist the king's command. So, they *came forward* to the king to bring their *charges against the Jews*. They greet the king with flattery, as was likely required: "O king, live forever!"

The Chaldean accusers remind Nebuchadnezzar of his own new law, *every man who hears the sound of the horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery, and bagpipe and all kinds of music, is to fall down and worship the golden image*. They also

remind him of the consequence of breaking this law: whoever does not worship the idol *shall be cast into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire.*

With the new law clearly stated, the Chaldeans then inform on who has broken it. They explain to Nebuchadnezzar *certain Jews* who have positions of *administration* in the *province of Babylon* have disobeyed. These law-breakers are in the ruling class and they are Jews. The Chaldeans know their political rivals by name: *Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego*. The crime of these three rulers are accused of is simple but serious; *they have disregarded* Nebuchadnezzar's command and *do not serve* his gods or *worship the golden image* he constructed.

The accusation that the three Jews have *disregarded* Nebuchadnezzar takes their actions out of context, which is typical in any political hit. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego have adapted to their new country well. Chapter 1 details their training and assimilation to Babylon, where they were taught the "literature and language of the Chaldeans and educated three years" before entering the king's service ([Daniel 1:4-5](#)). At the end of their training, the king found them to be exceptional in their "wisdom and understanding," that they were "ten times better than all the magicians and enchanterers" under Nebuchadnezzar's reign.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego have lived consistent with the idea of being "in the world but not of it," adapting to their new circumstances in life without betraying who they really are. They have been kidnapped from their true country, strangers in a strange land, but have learned and served to the best of their abilities to make as much of a positive impact as they can in their station in a man-made government.

Although the certain Chaldeans are exaggerating the offense of the three Jews, and taking their action out of context, it is a true accusation that they are not bowing to the statue. Despite their faithful employment toward Nebuchadnezzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego have always and only worshipped the God of Israel. They know who they truly are, that they belong to the Most High God, not idols in a foreign country. Nor have they bowed to a statue of gold (likely in the king's image). They will obey and worship God, not any other, including Nebuchadnezzar.

## **Biblical Text:**

**<sup>8</sup>For this reason at that time certain Chaldeans came forward and brought charges against the Jews. <sup>9</sup>They responded and said to Nebuchadnezzar the king: "O king, live forever! <sup>10</sup>You, O king, have made a decree that every man who hears the sound of the horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery, and bagpipe and all kinds of music, is to fall down and worship the golden image. <sup>11</sup>But whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire.<sup>12</sup> There are certain Jews whom you have appointed over the administration of the province of Babylon, *namely* Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. These men, O king, have disregarded you; they do not serve your gods or worship the golden image which you have set up."**