

3 Men Who Sacrificed While Serving God (Daniel 3:13-23)

Introduction:

1. These verses tell us about 3 young men who sacrificed while serving God.
2. Their names were Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.
3. Their example of commitment should encourage us to run our race with patience (Hebrews 12:1; 11:32-34a).

Discussion:

- I. (vs.13) THESE 3 MEN APPEARED BEFORE NEBUCHADNEZZAR
 - A. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were 3 young Jewish men who had been taken into captivity when the Babylonians took control of Judah.
 - B. Nebuchadnezzar was the king of Babylon [he was idolatrous and quite vain].
 - C. The reason why these 3 young men appeared before him is revealed in 3:1-12.
 1. (vs.1) The king had made a great image of gold.
 2. (vs.2-7) At the dedication, the king decreed that all people would bow before the image when music was played.
 3. The Jews in Babylon had a decision to make.
 - a. They could obey the king, and their lives would be spared.
 - b. They could obey God, and their souls would be spared (Exodus 20:3-5a).
 4. Because these young men had made commitments to God, they would not bow before the image.
 5. Just because the government says that something is right does not make it right (Acts 5:29).
 6. (vs.8-12) These 3 young men were accused of refusing to bow before the image.
 - a. This was a serious matter because they had been set over the affairs of the province of Babylon (2:49).
 - b. When the king heard that they refused to obey his order, he commanded for them to be brought before him.
- II. (vs.14-15) THE KING GAVE THEM ANOTHER CHANCE
 - A. If they would fall before the image everything would be well.
 - B. However, if they refused, they would be cast into the furnace.
 - C. Notice the king's vanity (vs.15b).
- III. (vs.16-18) THE YOUNG MEN RESPONDED
 - A. (vs.16) They were not "careful" [full of care] in giving their answer.
 - B. (vs.17) They stated that God was able to deliver them from the king.
 - C. (vs.18) They also said that they were not going to obey the king, even if God did not deliver them.
 - D. Their response shows that they had made a commitment to God and that the matter was already settled with them.
 - E. They had made a commitment in that they:
 1. pledged themselves to serve God
 2. entrusted the care of their souls to God.
- IV. (vs.19-23) THE KING CARRIED OUT HIS THREAT
- V. (VS.24-30) THE REST OF THE STORY

Conclusion:

1. Commitment is an extremely important quality in Christianity.
 - a. It will help us to remain faithful if we are called upon to sacrifice while we serve God.
 - b. It will keep us from following the ways of the world.
 - c. Our commitment will influence others for good.
2. Three keys to being committed to God:
 - a. sanctify Him in your heart (1 Peter 3:15a)
 - b. love God with all of your being (Matthew 22:37)
 - c. be completely devoted to Him (Matthew 6:24).