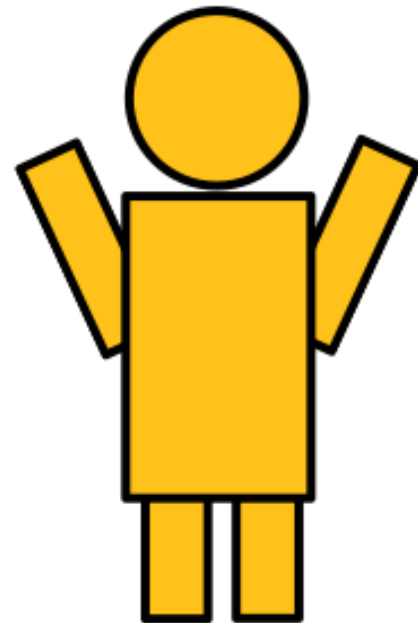


The Fierce Furnace

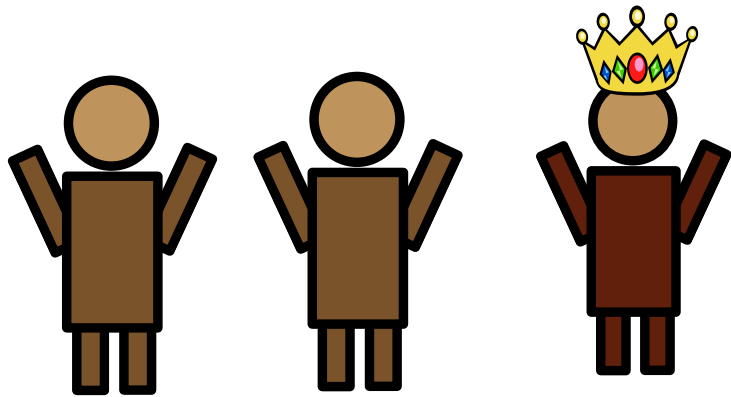


Daniel 3
New International
Reader's Version



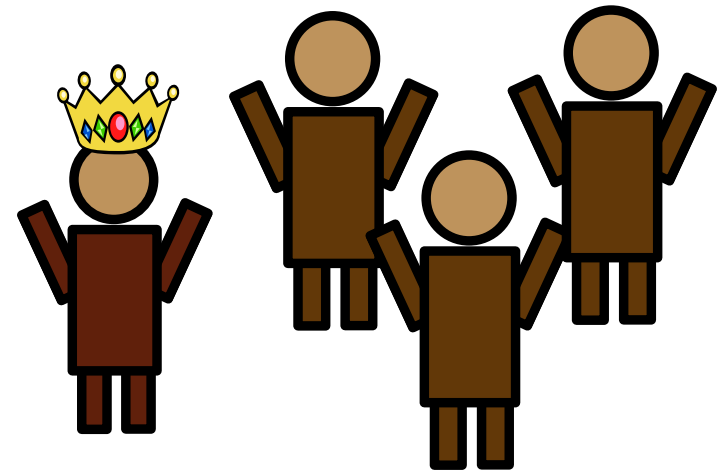
King Nebuchadnezzar made a statue that was covered with gold.

A messenger called out loudly, "Here is what the king commands you to do. You will soon hear the sound of horns and flutes. When you do, you must fall down and worship the gold statue that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. If you don't, you will be thrown into a blazing furnace right away."



At that time some people came forward. They said, "King Nebuchadnezzar, may you live forever! You commanded everyone to fall down and worship the gold statue. If they didn't, they would be thrown into a blazing furnace.

But you have appointed some Jews to help govern Babylon. Their names are Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. They don't serve your gods. And they refuse to worship the gold statue you have set up."



Nebuchadnezzar burned with anger. He sent for Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. So they were brought to him.

The king said to them, "Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, is what I heard about you true? Don't you worship the gold statue I set up?

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, "We might be thrown into the blazing furnace. But the God we serve is able to bring us out of it alive."



Then Nebuchadnezzar's anger burned against Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. Then he told his men to throw them into the blazing furnace.

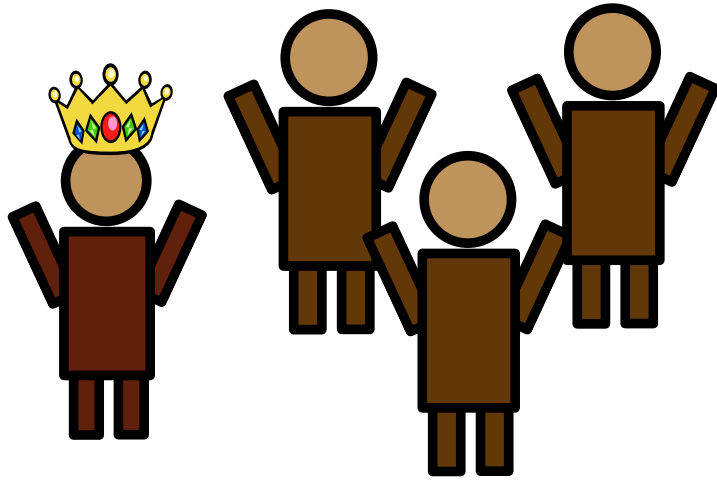
So they were tied up. Then they were thrown into the furnace.



Then King Nebuchadnezzar leaped to his feet. He was so amazed he asked his advisers, "Didn't we throw three men into the fire?"

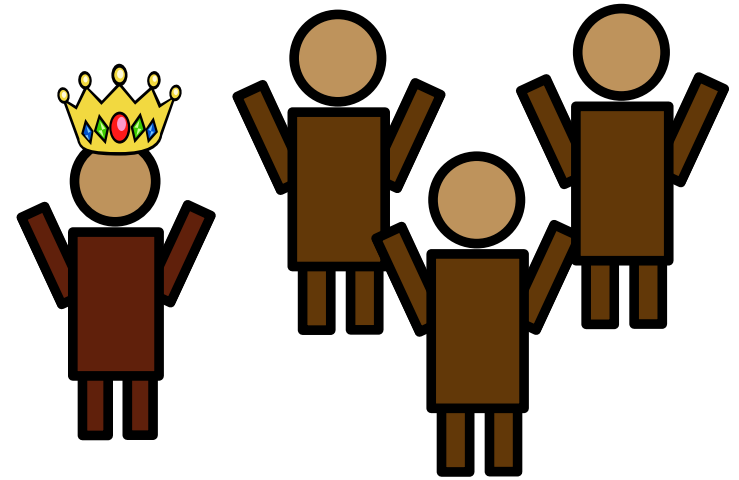
"Yes, we did," they replied.

The king said, "Look! I see four men walking around in the fire. They aren't tied up. And the fire hasn't even harmed them. The fourth man looks like a son of the gods."



Then the king approached the opening of the blazing furnace. He shouted, "Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, come out! You who serve the Most High God, come here!"

So they came out of the fire. The fire hadn't harmed their bodies. Not one hair on their heads was burned. Their robes weren't burned either. And they didn't even smell like smoke.



Then Nebuchadnezzar said, "May the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego be praised! He has sent his angel and saved his servants.

They trusted in him. They refused to obey my command. They were willing to give up their lives. They would rather die than serve or worship any god except their own God.