

# One Year Bible Challenge

Week 48, December 3, 2011: "The Fourth Man"

Old Testament: Daniel 2:24 to 11:1

Psalms: Psalm 119:81 to 121:8

New Testament: 1 Peter 4:7 to 1 John 3:6

Proverbs: Proverbs 28:15- to 28:28

## Is the Story about the four men in the fiery furnace to be taken literally? And who was the fourth man?

### **Daniel 3:1-29 (WEB)**

[1] Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was sixty cubits, and its breadth six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. [2] Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the satraps, the deputies, and the governors, the judges, the treasurers, the counselors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. [3] Then the satraps, the deputies, and the governors, the judges, the treasurers, the counselors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together to the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. [4] Then the herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, peoples, nations, and languages, [5] that whenever you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipe, and all kinds of music, you fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king has set up; [6] and whoever doesn't fall down and worship shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. [7] Therefore at that time, when all the peoples heard the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipe, and all kinds of music, all the peoples, the nations, and the languages, fell down and worshipped the golden image that

Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. [8] Therefore at that time certain Chaldeans came near, and brought accusation against the Jews. [9] They answered Nebuchadnezzar the king, O king, live for ever. [10] You, O king, have made a decree, that every man that shall hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipe, and all kinds of music, shall fall down and worship the golden image; [11] and whoever doesn't fall down and worship shall be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. [12] There are certain Jews whom you have appointed over the affairs of the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; these men, O king, have not respected you. They don't serve your gods, nor worship the golden image which you have set up. [13] Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Then they brought these men before the king. [14] Nebuchadnezzar answered them, Is it on purpose, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you don't serve my god, nor worship the golden image which I have set up? [15] Now if you are ready whenever you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipe, and all kinds of music to fall down and worship the image which I have made, well: but if you don't worship, you shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that god that shall deliver you out of my

hands? [16] Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered the king, Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. [17] If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace; and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. [18] But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods, nor worship the golden image which you have set up. [19] Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his appearance was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: therefore he spoke, and commanded that they should heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated. [20] He commanded certain mighty men who were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace. [21] Then these men were bound in their pants, their tunics, and their mantles, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. [22] Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. [23] These three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. [24] Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste: he spoke and said to his counselors, Didn't

we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered the king, True, O king. [25] He answered, Look, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are unharmed; and the aspect of the fourth is like a son of the gods. [26] Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace: he spoke and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, you servants of the Most High God, come forth, and come here. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came forth out of the midst of the fire. [27] The satraps, the deputies, and the governors, and the king's counselors, being gathered together, saw these men, that the fire had no power on their bodies, nor was the hair of their head singed, neither were their pants changed, nor had the smell of fire passed on them. [28] Nebuchadnezzar spoke and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his angel, and delivered his servants who trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and have yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God. [29] Therefore I make a decree, that every people, nation, and language, which speak anything evil against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill; because there is no other god who is able to deliver after this sort.

## What are the dangers to Christians mentioned in 2 Peter 2?

### **2 Peter 2:1-3 (RSV)**

[1] But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction.

[2] And many will follow their licentiousness, and because of them the way of truth will be reviled.

[3] And in their greed they will exploit you with false words; from of old their condemnation has not been idle, and their destruction has not been asleep.