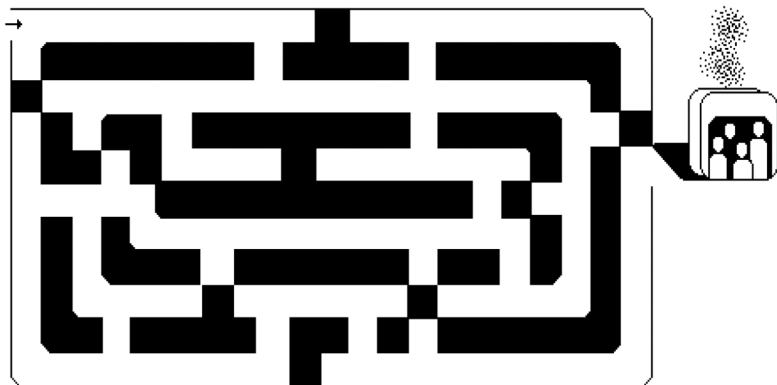


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ABED-NEGO	FURNACE	IMAGE	SHADRACH
BIND	GOD	MESHACH	SON OF GOD
DELIVER	GOLD	SERVE	WORSHIP
FIRE	HOT	NEBUCHADNEZZAR	



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The Fiery Furnace

By Paul Dallgas-Frey

Oh, oh!

King Nebuchadnezzar was at it again.

This time he had a giant statue set up in the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. It was made of gold, and taller than a nine story building.

Then King Nebuchadnezzar called all his royal officials - the satraps, the prefects, the magistrates, the treasurers, judges and counselors, and all the officials of the provinces - to come to the dedication of the golden statue King Nebuchadnezzar had set up in the plain of Dura.

A herald announced in a loud voice, "People of all nations, races, and languages! When you hear the sound of the horn, the pipe, the lyre, the trigon and drum and all the musical instruments, you are commanded to bow down and worship the golden statue King Nebuchadnezzar has set up in the plain of Dura. Whoever hears the sound of the horn, the pipe, the lyre, the trigon and drum and all the musical instruments, and does not fall down and worship the golden statue that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up in the plain of Dura - they shall be thrown into the fiery furnace."

And so, as soon as they heard the sound of the horn, the pipe, the lyre, the trigon and drum and all the musical instruments the people of all nations, races and languages fell down and worshiped the golden statue King Nebuchadnezzar had set up in the plain of Dura.

All except Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.

They worshipped God alone.

One day under the hot sun, the king's magicians, sorcerers and wisemen saw that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego did not fall down and worship the golden statue (Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were the Babylonian names King Nebuchadnezzar had

given Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah).

They were jealous of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego because they knew that God was with them. This was a perfect chance to get rid of them.

And so the magicians, sorcerers and wisemen reported to the King.

They said, "O Great and Mighty King, may you live for ever! You have made a decree that whenever people of all nations, races, and languages hear the sound of the horn, the pipe, the lyre, the trigon and drum and all the musical instruments they are to fall down and worship the golden statue you have set up in the plain of Dura. And whoever hears the sound of the horn, the pipe, the lyre, the trigon and drum and all the musical instruments, and does NOT fall down and worship the golden statue you have set up in the plain of Dura shall be thrown into the fiery furnace."

"Yes, this is so," said the king.

"Your Majesty," said the magicians, sorcerers and wisemen, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego do not worship the golden statue you have set up in the plain of Dura."

King Nebuchadnezzar flew into a rage.

He ordered Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be brought immediately before him.

The King bellowed, "Is this true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that when you heard the sound of the horn, the pipe, the lyre, the trigon and drum and all the musical instruments, you did not fall down and worship the golden statue I have set up in the plain of Dura? Listen to me! When you hear the sound of the horn, the pipe, the lyre, the trigon and drum and all the musical instruments, if you do not fall down and worship the golden statue I have set up in the plain of Dura, you shall be thrown into the fiery furnace! Who do you think can save you?"

"The God of heaven can save us," answered Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. "His power is greater than yours, and he can save us from your fiery furnace. But even if he chooses not to save us, we will not worship your god, or bow down before the golden statue you have set up in the plain of Dura."

The king's face turned red with anger.

... Continued next time!