

**EXPERIENCE
PUPPETS**

THE FIERY FURNACE FAILS TO FRY



The Fiery Furnace Fails To Fry

Cast:

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| 1) Nebuchadnezzar | 3) Aide—Melzar |
| 2) Reporter | 4) Shadrach |

Reporter: Good morning everyone. We're breaking in with an important news story. Something big is taking place in Babylon. It seems as though King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream a while ago in which he saw a huge statue made up of four different metals. The head was made of gold, the chest and arms of silver, the belly and thighs of brass and the legs of iron and clay mixed together. He brought in his counselors to tell him what the dream meant, but none of them could. The king was so angry he was ready to kill them all. When Daniel, a captive from Israel, found out they all were to be killed, he sent to the king and asked for some time and he would tell the king what the dream meant. Dan and his friends began to pray and their God showed them the answer. Dan thanked God for the answer and went to tell the king. It turns out that King Nebuchadnezzar is the head of gold. I'm standing just outside of the throne room in the palace. King Nebuchadnezzar has been thinking a lot about that dream and is trying to decide what to do about it. Let's see if we can see a bit of what he is doing.

Scene 1: Palace (*Nebuchadnezzar is pacing back and forth reflecting on his dream of the image.*)

King: I just can't get that image out of my mind. I'm the head of gold. Can you image that? Let's see... what was the rest of the statue? Ummm... the chest and arms were made out of silver. The belly and thighs were bronze and the feet of iron and clay mixed together. (*Move the arms to mimic drawing motions.*) Yeah, it looked kind of like that. Wait a minute!!! I just got a great idea!!! Why don't I have a statue made? After all, I'm the head of gold. Then everyone can see it. Instead of trying to mix all those metals together, I'll have the whole thing made out of gold. This is going to be good!! Now where is that aid of mine? Melzar! Melzar!

Aide: You called, your majesty?

King: Come look at this drawing. How much work will it take to build a gold statue like this?

Aide: Well sir, we have expert craftsmen available at your call. They're the best in the land and can have this completed in no time.

King: Great! Now this is important. It *needs* to be done right. The important question is... how big should we make it?

Aide: How big do you want it to be?

King: Big enough to be seen from all over. Let's see. If we put it on the plain of Dura, and make it big enough it could be seen for miles around.

Aide: It'd have to be quite large. I'd suggest something like 75 feet tall.

King: You've got to think BIG. (*Pause*) I want this statue to be 90 feet tall and 9 feet wide.

Aide: I will see to it right away, your majesty. (*Takes the drawing and departs.*)

Reporter: This is Chester Newman from BNN, the Babylonian News Network. King Nebuchadnezzar has gathered all the leaders of his kingdom for a special announcement and to unveil something he's had master craftsmen working on for weeks. There's been a lot of speculation about the announcement, but the king has kept a tight lid on it. No one knows for sure what it will be. Oh! There's King Nebuchadnezzar coming out now. Let's see what is going to happen...

Scene 2: The Unveiling of the Image

King: (*Enters excited and anxious to begin.*) Oh, this is great! What a beautiful day! I can't wait any longer. Ok, Melzar, let's get this thing going.

Aide: (*Steps forward.*) Attention! Attention everyone! We are here today to unveil a gold statue of King Nebuchadnezzar that expresses how great a ruler he is. (*Points offstage.*) Isn't it wonderful? The king has also issued a proclamation, which I will now read. (*Holds a scroll.*) To you it is commanded, O peoples, nations and languages, that at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, you shall fall down and worship the gold image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up; and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into a burning fiery furnace.

Reporter: This is Chester Newman with another urgent breaking story. Our cameras picked up three young men who refused bow down when the music played. While every one else was down on their faces before the statue, they would not bow. Apparently King Nebuchadnezzar didn't see them, but one of his counselors did. I'm told that he is on his way right now to tell the king. I wouldn't want to be one of those guys. According to our records, they are some of the Jewish young men that were taken captive several years ago and trained by the king himself. My sources tell me that they continually talk about serving the "true and living God" and that they say that he is always there to help them in hard times. I guess we'll find out if that's true or not because they are about to face a *real* hard time in front of the king. We'll keep you informed on what happens. This is Chester Newman for BNN news.

Scene 3: Palace

King: What a fantastic day! All those people bowing down to me. That statue sure was beautiful the way the gold gleamed in the sunlight. This has been such a great day; I don't think that *anything* could ruin it.

Aide: Greetings, your majesty.

King: Ah, Melzar. It is good to see you. Wasn't this a fantastic day? The weather was beautiful; the workmen did a fantastic job with the statue, the crowd was excited...

Aide: I'm afraid your majesty that it wasn't quite as good as you think.

King: What? It couldn't have been better.

Aide: I'm sorry to have to be the one to inform you of this sir, but when the music played, three of your servants refused to bow.

King: (*Angrily.*) Who would dare refuse to bow down to me? I want those men brought here before me right now.

Aide: Right away your majesty.

King: I can't believe that *anyone* would refuse to bow down, especially since they knew they would be thrown into the fiery furnace.

Aide: (*Brings in the men.*) O King Nebuchadnezzar, these are the three men I told you about.

King: Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego that you do not serve my gods or worship the gold image, which I have set up? Now if you are ready at the time you hear the sound of the music, and you fall down and worship the image, which I have made, good! But if you do not worship, you shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. And who is the god who will deliver you from my hands?

Shad: O King Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to talk among ourselves before answering you. If our God wants, **he** can and **is able** to deliver us from the fiery furnace and he *will* deliver us from your hand, O king. If he decides not to deliver us from the furnace, understand this O king, we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image, which you have set up.

King: (*To aide.*) I want you to go to the furnace and tell them to heat it seven times hotter than it's ever been heated. Then get the strongest and bravest soldiers to tie up these men and throw them in.

Reporter: This furnace indeed is hot; hotter than I've ever seen it. Here come some soldiers and they've tied up three young men and are leading up to the furnace's smoke stack. Wait a minute...I recognize those men. They are the ones who refused to bow before the statue. Whew! That fire must be hot! The soldiers aren't even close to the furnace and already you can see that the heat is bothering them. Wow! Look at that! They just threw the 3 guys into the furnace but the heat was so bad the four soldiers died before they could get back. That is one hot fire. Nebuchadnezzar is down at the doorway to the furnace and is checking to see what has happened to the young men.

Scene 4: Furnace

King: Let's see what's going on in the furnace. I'll teach those men to bow down to me! ...Melzar! Didn't we throw three guys into the furnace?

Aide: That would be correct your majesty.

King: Did one of the soldiers fall in by mistake?

Aide: No. They're all accounted for, but they all died from the heat of the furnace.

King: But I see four individuals walking around in there. And one of them looks special. In fact, he looks like a son of the gods. (*To Shadrach.*) You men, who serve the Most High God, come out of there and let us take a look at you.

Aide: Unbelievable. Nothing on them is burned. The only thing the fire did was set them free from their ropes. They don't even smell like smoke!

King: Blessed is the God of these men who sent his angel into the furnace to deliver His servants who trusted in Him. They have frustrated the king's word and yielded up their bodies because they would not worship any god except their God. I now make a decree that any people, nation or language that speaks anything amiss against the God of these young men shall be put to death and their houses destroyed because there is no other God who can deliver like this. (*To aide.*) I want you to promote these men and give them better and more important jobs.

Aide: Right away, your majesty.

All Leave

Reporter: So there you have it everyone. These young men chose to trust God and do what they knew was right. They didn't know for sure that God would deliver them and probably thought they were going to die in that furnace, but they kept trusting God. They kept their focus on God and how great he is. God gave them strength to stand strong and honored them for trusting him. If you are a child of God, he wants you to trust him when you go through hard times. I'm sure you won't have to worry about being thrown into a fiery furnace, but you may have people who will laugh at you if they find out you believe in Jesus. Others may try to get you to do things you know are wrong. When these things happen, trust God and ask him to help you stand strong for him. This has been an amazing story. Will you choose to trust God when you go through hard times? This is Chester Newman saying so long for the Babylonian News Network.