

Lutheran Church of the Master
580 Kuhn Road, Carol Stream, Illinois 60188
Curt Gerald, Interim Pastor
April 12, 2009
Easter Sunday (10:45AM)
"An Unstoppable Force"

Acts 10:34-43 (New International Version)

³⁴Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism ³⁵but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right. ³⁶You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, telling the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. ³⁷You know what has happened throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached— ³⁸how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him. ³⁹"We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a tree, ⁴⁰but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen. ⁴¹He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen—by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. ⁴²He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

Colossians 3:1-4 (New International Version)

Rules for Holy Living

¹Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. ³For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ, who is your ^{la} life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Matthew 28:1-10 (New International Version)

The Resurrection

¹After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

²There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. ³His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. ⁴The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

⁵The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. ⁶He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he

lay. ⁷Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you."

⁸So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. ¹⁰Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

Dear friends in Christ, the one who is Risen, the one who lives, and the one who at a time known only by the Creator of all that is shall return ...

Grace and Peace!

This homily is based on three passages from the lessons that have been read this morning:

⁸So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. ¹⁰Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

³⁹"We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem

¹Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

There was a time when people of God were almost obsessed with their faith, and that obsession enabled them to do great things.

You may remember one such story ... many of us read it or maybe were told it back in our Sunday School days. Perhaps you remember the joke that circulated about this story: when the kids came up to their parents after Sunday School, the parents asked what they had studied that day. The children said, "well, we studied about three kinds of houses ... , a shack, my shack, and a bungalow." Does that help you remember the story?

I remember my Sunday School teacher taking out the old flannel board and putting three Hebrew men on it: Shadrack, Meshack, and Abednego.

Remember the story: King Nebuchadnezzar built a golden image ... ninety feet high and nine feet wide ... and issued an executive decree that everyone was to worship it ... and "whoever does not fall down and worship will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace."

Well, there are three Jewish fellows who have a political office under King Nebuchadnezzar who will not betray their faith in God ... so they refuse to obey the King's orders ... and so some Chaldeans, perhaps astrologers, came to the King and tattled on them ... so the King is enraged at the arrogance of Shadrach, Meshack, and Abednego ... so he orders them to appear before them and when he questions them about their actions their reply is:

"...O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. ¹⁷ If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. ¹⁸ But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up."

¹⁹ Then Nebuchadnezzar was furious with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and his attitude toward them changed. He ordered the furnace heated seven times hotter than usual ²⁰ and commanded some of the strongest soldiers in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and throw them into the blazing furnace. ²¹ So these men, wearing their robes, trousers, turbans and other clothes, were bound and thrown into the blazing furnace. ²² The king's command was so urgent and the furnace so hot that the flames of the fire killed the soldiers who took up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, ²³ and these three men, firmly tied, fell into the blazing furnace. "

Now, if you were to open the pew Bible in front of you, you would find that the next two verses (Daniel 3:24-25) would be the following:

²⁴ Then King Nebuchadnezzar leaped to his feet in amazement and asked his advisers, "Weren't there three men that we tied up and threw into the fire?"

They replied, "Certainly, O king."

²⁵ He said, "Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth looks like a son of the gods."

But, if you were to be in a Roman Catholic church today and reading their Bible would notice that our verses 24 and 25 are their verses 91 and 92 ... and that in between (verses 24-90) is a portion of scripture that is ascribed to this 4th person in the fire ... named Azariah ... who prays a prayer ... which the church has used in its Easter Eve Vigil for hundreds of years ... it is called Canticle 18 (turn to it in the Lutheran Book of Worship) ... and this Canticle envisions everything known at that time as having a voice and praising the Lord.

74

Let the earth bless the Lord, praise and exalt him above all forever.

75

Mountains and hills, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.

76

Everything growing from the earth, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.

77

You springs, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.

78

Seas and rivers, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.

79

You dolphins and all water creatures, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.

80

All you birds of the air, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.

81

All you beasts, wild and tame, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.

And that is why the sign out front this week says: “Even the bunny believes.”

Is it an overstatement? Perhaps ... but who knows. Because, you see, this is a day when the world thinks that the Church is overstating its message ANYWAY.

The world around us knows that bunnies don't believe, that mountains and hills can't speak, that you and I get what we deserve, that fate is what determines when I die (when my time comes my time comes), that when we're dead that is “all she wrote,” the world knows that the only truth is what can be seen, felt, proven.

But the Church continues to proclaim a message which the Apostle Paul referred to as “silliness” -- **1 Corinthians 1:18-25 (The Message)**

18-21 The Message that points to Christ on the Cross seems like sheer silliness to those hellbent on destruction, but for those on the way of salvation it makes perfect sense. This is the way God works, and most powerfully as it turns out. It's written,

I'll turn conventional wisdom on its head,

I'll expose so-called experts as crackpots.

So where can you find someone truly wise, truly educated, truly intelligent in this day and age? Hasn't God exposed it all as pretentious nonsense? Since the world in all its fancy wisdom never had a clue when it came to knowing God, God in his wisdom took delight in using what the world considered dumb—preaching, of all things!—to bring those who trust him into the way of salvation.

These three lessons today remind us that in the early hours and days and years and centuries of the Church, our Christian forbearers were so obsessed with this silly message that they were willing to be Christian Shadracks, Meshacks, and Abednegos for the faith ... and many were the martyrs who chose dieing over living if living meant denying Jesus in any way.

Erwin Raphael McManus refers to this force that empowered those folks as “an unstoppable force.”

Erwin Raphael McManus, ***an Unstoppable Force*** ... P.14

During the season of Easter, Jim and I are going to be preaching a series on this book ... if you have it or can obtain it, you might want to read through page 61 before next weekend ...

Somewhere along the way ... I think particularly in the last century ... a great deal of the Church lost this sense of wonderment ... but the unstoppable force is still present in the Church even if it has been locked up or stuffed away in our desire to be satisfied with what is and our lack of wonderment and what might be.

Perhaps another reason for this is that the Church has lost its sense of joy. Do you know what ***RISUS PASCHALIS*** is?

Holy Humor...pp 65-70.

If Christ is risen, then why should we not be the most happy and joyful people in the world?

If Christ is risen, then why should that resurrection not be the central focus of our life and of our living?

If Christ is risen, then why shouldn't everything created join together in praising our Creator ... including mountains and oceans and whales and birds and yes, even bunnies ...

If Christ is risen, then what have we to fear.

And today, the Church joins with Christians around the world and throughout all of history in saying:

P: CHRIST IS RISEN!

C: CHRIST IS RISEN INDEED.

Noun1.Canticles - an Old Testament book consisting of a collection of love poems traditionally attributed to Solomon but actually written much later

[Canticle of Canticles](#), [Song of Solomon](#), [Song of Songs](#)

[Old Testament](#) - the collection of books comprising the sacred scripture of the Hebrews and recording their history as the chosen people; the first half of the Christian Bible

[Hagiographa](#), [Ketubim](#), [Writings](#) - the third of three divisions of the Hebrew Scriptures
[sapiential book](#), [wisdom book](#), [wisdom literature](#) - any of the biblical books (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus) that are considered to contain wisdom

Texts and Origin

The Prayer and accompanying Song are not found in the Hebrew/Aramaic text of the Book of Daniel, nor are they cited in any extant ancient Jewish writings. However, the passage does appear in certain ancient witnesses, notably the Greek, Syriac, and Latin.

The origins of these writings are obscure. Whether the accounts were originally composed in Hebrew (or Aramaic) or in Greek is uncertain, although many modern scholars conclude on the basis of textual evidence that there was probably an original Semitic edition. The date of composition of these documents is also uncertain, although many scholars favor a date either in the second or first century B.C.

Catholic and Protestant Bibles both include 27 books in the New Testament. Protestant Bibles have only 39 books in the Old Testament, however, while Catholic Bibles have 46. The seven books included in Catholic Bibles are Tobit, Judith, 1 and 2 Maccabees, Wisdom, Sirach, and Baruch. Catholic Bibles also include sections in the Books of Esther and Daniel which are not found in Protestant Bibles. These books are called the **deuterocanonical books**. The Catholic Church considers these books to be inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Daniel 3 (New International Version)

Daniel 3

The Image of Gold and the Fiery Furnace

¹ King Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold, ninety feet high and nine feet ^[a] wide, and set it up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. ² He then summoned the satraps, prefects, governors, advisers, treasurers, judges, magistrates and all the other provincial officials to come to the dedication of the image he had set up. ³ So the satraps, prefects, governors, advisers, treasurers, judges,

magistrates and all the other provincial officials assembled for the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up, and they stood before it.

⁴ Then the herald loudly proclaimed, "This is what you are commanded to do, O peoples, nations and men of every language: ⁵ As soon as you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music, you must fall down and worship the image of gold that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. ⁶ Whoever does not fall down and worship will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace."

⁷ Therefore, as soon as they heard the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp and all kinds of music, all the peoples, nations and men of every language fell down and worshiped the image of gold that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

⁸ At this time some astrologers ^[b] came forward and denounced the Jews. ⁹ They said to King Nebuchadnezzar, "O king, live forever! ¹⁰ You have issued a decree, O king, that everyone who hears the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music must fall down and worship the image of gold, ¹¹ and that whoever does not fall down and worship will be thrown into a blazing furnace. ¹² But there are some Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon—Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego—who pay no attention to you, O king. They neither serve your gods nor worship the image of gold you have set up."

¹³ Furious with rage, Nebuchadnezzar summoned Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. So these men were brought before the king, ¹⁴ and Nebuchadnezzar said to them, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the image of gold I have set up? ¹⁵ Now when you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music, if you are ready to fall down and worship the image I made, very good. But if you do not worship it, you will be thrown immediately into a blazing furnace. Then what god will be able to rescue you from my hand?"

¹⁶ Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. ¹⁷ If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. ¹⁸ But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up."

¹⁹ Then Nebuchadnezzar was furious with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and his attitude toward them changed. He ordered the furnace heated seven times hotter than usual ²⁰ and commanded some of the strongest soldiers in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and throw them into the blazing furnace. ²¹ So these men, wearing their robes, trousers, turbans and other clothes, were bound and thrown into the blazing furnace. ²² The king's command was so urgent and the furnace so hot that the flames of the fire killed the soldiers who took up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, ²³ and these three men, firmly tied, fell into the blazing furnace.

²⁴ Then King Nebuchadnezzar leaped to his feet in amazement and asked his advisers, "Weren't there three men that we tied up and threw into the fire?"

They replied, "Certainly, O king."

²⁵ He said, "Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth looks like a son of the gods."

²⁶ Nebuchadnezzar then approached the opening of the blazing furnace and shouted, "Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out! Come here!"

So Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego came out of the fire,²⁷ and the satraps, prefects, governors and royal advisers crowded around them. They saw that the fire had not harmed their bodies, nor was a hair of their heads singed; their robes were not scorched, and there was no smell of fire on them.

²⁸ Then Nebuchadnezzar said, "Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who has sent his angel and rescued his servants! They trusted in him and defied the king's command and were willing to give up their lives rather than serve or worship any god except their own God.²⁹ Therefore I decree that the people of any nation or language who say anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego be cut into pieces and their houses be turned into piles of rubble, for no other god can save in this way."

³⁰ Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the province of Babylon.

Daniel

Chapter 3

1

¹ King Nebuchadnezzar had a golden statue made, sixty cubits high and six cubits wide, which he set up in the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon.

2

² He then ordered the satraps, prefects, and governors, the counselors, treasurers, judges, magistrates and all the officials of the provinces to be summoned to the dedication of the statue which he had set up.

3

The satraps, prefects, and governors, the counselors, treasurers, judges, and magistrates and all the officials of the provinces, all these came together for the dedication and stood before the statue which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

4

³ A herald cried out: "Nations and peoples of every language, when you hear the sound of the trumpet, flute, lyre, harp, psaltery, bagpipe, and all the other musical instruments,

5

you are ordered to fall down and worship the golden statue which King Nebuchadnezzar has set up.

6

⁴ Whoever does not fall down and worship shall be instantly cast into a white-hot furnace."

7

Therefore, as soon as they heard the sound of the trumpet, flute, lyre, harp, psaltery, bagpipe, and all the other musical instruments, the nations and peoples of every language all fell down and worshiped the golden statue which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

8

At that point, some of the Chaldeans came and accused the Jews

9

to King Nebuchadnezzar: "O king, live forever!

10

O king, you issued a decree that everyone who heard the sound of the trumpet, flute, lyre, harp, psaltery, bagpipe, and all the other musical instruments should fall down and worship the golden statue;

11

whoever did not was to be cast into a white-hot furnace.

12

There are certain Jews whom you have made administrators of the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego; these men, O king, have paid no attention to you; they will not serve your god or worship the golden statue which you set up."

13

Nebuchadnezzar flew into a rage and sent for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who were promptly brought before the king.

14

King Nebuchadnezzar questioned them: "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you will not serve my god, or worship the golden statue that I set up?"

15

Be ready now to fall down and worship the statue I had made, whenever you hear the sound of the trumpet, flute, lyre, harp, psaltery, bagpipe, and all the other musical instruments; otherwise, you shall be instantly cast into the white-hot furnace; and who is the God that can deliver you out of my hands?"

16

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered King Nebuchadnezzar, "There is no need for us to defend ourselves before you in this matter.

17

⁵ If our God, whom we serve, can save us from the white-hot furnace and from your hands, O king, may he save us!

18

But even if he will not, know, O king, that we will not serve your god or worship the golden statue which you set up."

19

Nebuchadnezzar's face became livid with utter rage against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He ordered the furnace to be heated seven times more than usual

20

and had some of the strongest men in his army bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and cast them into the white-hot furnace.

21

22 They were bound and cast into the white-hot furnace with their coats, hats, shoes and
other garments,

23 for the king's order was urgent. So huge a fire was kindled in the furnace that the flames
devoured the men who threw Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego into it.

24 But these three fell, bound, into the midst of the white-hot furnace.

25 ⁶ They walked about in the flames, singing to God and blessing the Lord.

26 In the fire Azariah stood up and prayed aloud:

27 "Blessed are you, and praiseworthy, O Lord, the God of our fathers, and glorious forever
is your name.

28 For you are just in all you have done; all your deeds are faultless, all your ways right, and
all your judgments proper.

29 You have executed proper judgments in all that you have brought upon us and upon
Jerusalem, the holy city of our fathers. By a proper judgment you have done all this
because of our sins;

30 For we have sinned and transgressed by departing from you, and we have done every
kind of evil.

31 Your commandments we have not heeded or observed, nor have we done as you ordered
us for our good.

32 Therefore all you have brought upon us, all you have done to us, you have done by a
proper judgment.

33 You have handed us over to our enemies, lawless and hateful rebels; to an unjust king,
the worst in all the world.

34 Now we cannot open our mouths; we, your servants, who revere you, have become a
shame and a reproach.

35 For your name's sake, do not deliver us up forever, or make void your covenant.

36 Do not take away your mercy from us, for the sake of Abraham, your beloved, Isaac your
servant, and Israel your holy one,

37 To whom you promised to multiply their offspring like the stars of heaven, or the sand on
the shore of the sea.

38 For we are reduced, O Lord, beyond any other nation, brought low everywhere in the
world this day because of our sins.

39 We have in our day no prince, prophet, or leader, no holocaust, sacrifice, oblation, or
incense, no place to offer first fruits, to find favor with you.

40 But with contrite heart and humble spirit let us be received;

41 As though it were holocausts of rams and bullocks, or thousands of fat lambs, So let our
sacrifice be in your presence today as we follow you unreservedly; for those who trust in
you cannot be put to shame.

42 And now we follow you with our whole heart, we fear you and we pray to you.

43 Do not let us be put to shame, but deal with us in your kindness and great mercy.

44 Deliver us by your wonders, and bring glory to your name, O Lord:

45 Let all those be routed who inflict evils on your servants; Let them be shamed and
powerless, and their strength broken;

46 Let them know that you alone are the Lord God, glorious over the whole world."

47 Now the king's men who had thrown them in continued to stoke the furnace with
brimstone, pitch, tow, and faggots.

48 The flames rose forty-nine cubits above the furnace,
49 and spread out, burning the Chaldeans nearby.

50 But the angel of the Lord went down into the furnace with Azariah and his companions,
drove the fiery flames out of the furnace,
51 and made the inside of the furnace as though a dew-laden breeze were blowing through it.
The fire in no way touched them or caused them pain or harm.

52 Then these three in the furnace with one voice sang, glorifying and blessing God:

53 "Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of our fathers, praiseworthy and exalted above all
forever; And blessed is your holy and glorious name, praiseworthy and exalted above all
for all ages.

54 Blessed are you in the temple of your holy glory, praiseworthy and glorious above all
forever.

Blessed are you on the throne of your kingdom, praiseworthy and exalted above all
55 forever.

Blessed are you who look into the depths from your throne upon the cherubim,
56 praiseworthy and exalted above all forever.

Blessed are you in the firmament of heaven, praiseworthy and glorious forever.
57

Bless the Lord, all you works of the Lord, praise and exalt him above all forever.
58

Angels of the Lord, bless the Lord, praise and exalt him above all forever.
59

You heavens, bless the Lord, praise and exalt him above all forever.
60

All you waters above the heavens, bless the Lord, praise and exalt him above all forever.
61

All you hosts of the Lord, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
62

Sun and moon, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
63

Stars of heaven, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
64

Every shower and dew, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
65

All you winds, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
66

Fire and heat, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
67

[Cold and chill, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
68

Dew and rain, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
69

Frost and chill, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
70

Ice and snow, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
71

Nights and days, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
72

Light and darkness, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
73

Lightnings and clouds, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.
74

Let the earth bless the Lord, praise and exalt him above all forever.
75

Mountains and hills, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.

76 Everything growing from the earth, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.

77 You springs, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.

78 Seas and rivers, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.

79 You dolphins and all water creatures, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.

80 All you birds of the air, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.

81 All you beasts, wild and tame, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.

82 You sons of men, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.

83 O Israel, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.

84 Priests of the Lord, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.

85 Servants of the Lord, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.

86 Spirits and souls of the just, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.

87 Holy men of humble heart, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.

88 Hananiah, Azariah, Mishael, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever. For he has delivered us from the nether world, and saved us from the power of death; He has freed us from the raging flame and delivered us from the fire.

89 Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endures forever.

90 Bless the God of gods, all you who fear the Lord; praise him and give him thanks, because his mercy endures forever." Hearing them sing, and astonished at seeing them alive,

91 King Nebuchadnezzar rose in haste and asked his nobles, "Did we not cast three men bound into the fire?" "Assuredly, O king," they answered.

92 ¹ "But," he replied, "I see four men unfettered and unhurt, walking in the fire, and the fourth looks like a son of God."

93 Then Nebuchadnezzar came to the opening of the white-hot furnace and called to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: "Servants of the most high God, come out." Thereupon Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out of the fire.

94

When the satraps, prefects, governors, and nobles of the king came together, they saw that the fire had had no power over the bodies of these men; not a hair of their heads had been singed, nor were their garments altered; there was not even a smell of fire about them.

95

Nebuchadnezzar exclaimed, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who sent his angel to deliver the servants that trusted in him; they disobeyed the royal command and yielded their bodies rather than serve or worship any god except their own God.

96

Therefore I decree for nations and peoples of every language that whoever blasphemes the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be cut to pieces and his house destroyed. For there is no other God who can rescue like this."

97

Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the province of Babylon.

98

⁸ King Nebuchadnezzar to the nations and peoples of every language, wherever they dwell on earth: abundant peace!

99

⁹ It has seemed good to me to publish the signs and wonders which the most high God has accomplished in my regard.

100

How great are his signs, how mighty his wonders; his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion endures through all generations.