

“Then a herald shouted out, “People of all races and nations and languages, listen to the king’s command! When you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes, and other musical instruments, bow to the ground to worship King Nebuchadnezzar’s gold statue. Anyone who refuses to obey will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace.” Daniel 3:4-6 NLT

## lectio // Daniel 3:1-18

It should not surprise me that this story follows my devo just a few days ago out of Mark 10, It was from October 15th. Jesus told the disciples about rulers and authorities and how they lead. Well here is a perfect example in Daniel’s time. Nebuchadnezzar and his gigantic statue - 90 feet tall and 9 feet wide! When the party music plays everyone must bow to the statue. No bow, then you burn. Simple right? Egotistical? Sure. All powerful? Maybe. But Nebby pushed a group of young Jewish men to far. They went with the name change, they received a “reorientation” process of education. They even rose in the ranks to become leaders over a province in Babylon. But when it came down to a ridiculous show of loyalty which equated Nebby being God, they said no. They said no and it made the king furious. Interesting that Nebby even gave them a second chance, being so mercifully maniacal. The men told the king, “whether we live or die, you’re not God at all, you’re not all that powerful and you’re not in charge.” Blip, boop, bop, that should have been the end of the story. Men get thrown in, die in an excruciatingly painful fashion. King’s authority is re-established and the music and bowing goes on. Apparently, Nebby had also pushed God too far as well. The fire is stoked, the men are thrown in and Jesus appears walking around, talking with the guys inside. What were they taking about? Did it feel like a dream to the men? Who knows how long this went on, then they heard their Babylonian names being called to come out. They walk out un-affected by the fire. No burns, no missing eye brows, no smell of smoke. God used Nebby in his will, his plans for Israel, but Nebby was on a short leash. There have been other leaders who thought they were God, and thought they were untouchable and unstoppable. I don’t understand why God had allowed them to be in power for so long, but he did (and does).

## oratio

Dad,

There are so many ruthless, wicked rulers in our world today. They are drunk with power and out of their minds with control. These are hard things for me to understand. Many of them even have statues of themselves! I have learned to trust you even though I cannot comprehend that level of evil and the destruction of life they cause. I am reminded, however, that we are different because of you. May that taste of power never pass my lips and may our own country, our own officials never forget who is really in power and control. Let our leaders, both local and national, come under your authority and wisdom, even if they are not directly serving you.

## contemplatio

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root