

# Daniel 3:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?

## Analysis

The king's question 'Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?' offers opportunity to recant. Nebuchadnezzar possibly hoped the accusation was false, given these men's valuable service. Yet the question's framing—'do not ye serve my gods'—reveals the issue's theological nature. The king claims ownership of deities ('my gods'), showing pagan understanding of gods as national property or royal assets. The accusation targets both general idolatry ('my gods') and specific state worship (the image), making religious conviction rather than political rebellion the real issue.

## Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern polytheism allowed worshiping multiple deities without theological contradiction. Refusing to honor a king's gods was seen as politically dangerous—divine favor secured military victory and prosperity. Subjects were expected to honor state gods even while maintaining personal patron deities. The Jews' exclusive monotheism made them religiously inflexible in polytheistic societies. Nebuchadnezzar's question shows genuine puzzlement—why would these capable administrators risk everything over religious scruples meaningless to polytheists?

## Related Passages

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**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

## Study Questions

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1. How does exclusive loyalty to the one true God conflict with cultures that demand tolerance for all religious claims?
2. What does the king's ownership language ('my gods') reveal about pagan religion as political tool rather than transcendent truth?

## Interlinear Text

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שָׁדָךְ	בָּהּ	פָּצַד	אָ	לְהָ	וְיַ	אָמָּה	רַ	נְבֻכָּדְנֶצֶר	נִתְּנָהּ	הָ		
spake	Nebuchadnezzar	and said		H0		unto them	Is it true	O Shadrach				
H6032	H5020	H560				H6656		H7715				
פָּלָחַ	יְהָ	אִתִּיכְוֹן		לֹא	לְאֱלֹהִים	יְ	בְּגַ	וְ	לְעֵבֶד	דָּ	מִישָׁ	הָ
Meshach		and Abednego		H0	my gods		do not	ye	serve			
H4336		H5665			H426		H3809	H383	H6399			
סְגִּידִים		לֹא	בְּקַ	יִמְתַּ	דִּ	יְ	דְּבָבָ	אָ	וְלֹא	לִמְ		
image	the golden		H1768	which I have set			do not	worship				
H6755	H1722			H6966			H3809	H5457				

## Additional Cross-References

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**Jeremiah 50:2** (Parallel theme): Declare ye among the nations, and publish, and set up a standard; publish, and conceal not: say, Babylon is taken, Bel is

confounded, Merodach is broken in pieces; her idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces.

**Daniel 3:1** (Parallel theme): Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.

**Isaiah 46:1** (Parallel theme): Bel boweth down, Nebo stoopeth, their idols were upon the beasts, and upon the cattle: your carriages were heavy loaden; they are a burden to the weary beast.

**Daniel 4:8** (References God): But at the last Daniel came in before me, whose name was Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god, and in whom is the spirit of the holy gods: and before him I told the dream, saying,

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