

YEAR 2, EASTER 2, SATURDAY: EVENING PRAYER

For use with the First Lesson

Adapted from *The Vocabulary of the Church* (1960):

Nebuchadnezzar	ne-byuu-kuhd-NEZ-ur
Shadrach	SHAD-rak
Meshach	MEE-shak
Abednego	uh-BED-ni-go

The First Lesson. The Reader begins

A Reading from the Book of Daniel

Then Nebuchadnezzar was full of fury, and the expression of his face was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He ordered the furnace heated seven times more than it was wont to be heated. And he ordered certain mighty men of his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace. Then these men were bound in their mantles, their tunics, their hats, and their other garments, and they were cast into the burning fiery furnace. Because the king's order was strict and the furnace very hot, the flame of the fire slew those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach,

and Abed'nego, fell bound into the burning fiery furnace. Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and rose up in haste. He said to his counselors, “Did we not cast three men bound into the fire?” They answered the king, “True, O king.” He answered, “But I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods.” Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the door of the burning fiery furnace and said, “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed'nego, servants of the Most High God, come forth, and come here!” Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed'nego came out from the fire. And the satraps, the prefects, the governors, and the king’s counselors gathered together and saw that the fire had not had any power over the bodies of those men; the hair of their heads was not singed, their mantles were not harmed, and no smell of fire had come upon them. Nebuchadnezzar said, “Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed'nego, who has sent his angel and delivered his servants, who trusted in him, and set at naught the king’s command, and yielded up their bodies rather than serve and worship any god except their own God. Therefore I make a decree: Any people, nation, or language that speaks anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and

Abed'nego shall be torn limb from limb, and their houses laid in ruins; for there is no other god who is able to deliver in this way.” Then the king promoted Shadrach, Me'shach, and Abed'nego in the province of Babylon.

The Reader concludes The Word of the Lord.

The Second Lesson. The Reader begins

A Reading from the First Letter of Peter

The end of all things is at hand; therefore keep sane and sober for your prayers. Above all hold unfailing your love for one another, since love covers a multitude of sins. Practice hospitality ungrudgingly to one another. As each has received a gift, employ it for one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who utters oracles of God; whoever renders service, as one who renders it by the strength which God supplies; in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal which comes upon you to prove you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice in so far as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed. If

you are reproached for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or a wrongdoer, or a mischief-maker; yet if one suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but under that name let him glorify God. For the time has come for judgment to begin with the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? And “If the righteous man is scarcely saved, where will the impious and sinner appear?” Therefore let those who suffer according to God’s will do right and entrust their souls to a faithful Creator.

The Reader concludes The Word of the Lord.