

Chapter 9

A Spiritual Journey: A Look at Wisdom and Apocalyptic Literature

Called to Prayer

Faithful friends are a sturdy shelter; whoever finds one finds a treasure.

Faithful friends are beyond price, no amount can balance their worth.

Faithful friends are life-saving medicine; those who fear God will find them.

Those who fear the Lord enjoy stable friendship, for as they are, so will their neighbors be.

—Sirach 6:14-17

- *Reflection:* What are some of the characteristics of a faithful friend according to Sirach? What are other characteristics you could add to the list?
- *Meditation:* How are you doing as a friend to those around you? What could this passage be speaking to you about your own abilities as a friend? In what ways are you doing well as a friend and in what ways can you grow?

Resolution: Reflect on the faithful friends in your life. Make time to write a note or tell that person face-to-face how much their friendship is a treasure to you.

Chapter 10

The Journey Continues: To the Time of Jesus and Beyond

Called to Prayer

Then King Nebuchadnezzar was startled and rose in haste, asking his counselors, “Did we not cast three men bound into the fire?” “Certainly, O king,” they answered. “But,” he replied, “I see four men unbound and unhurt, walking in the fire, and the fourth looks like a son of God.” Then Nebuchadnezzar came to the opening of the white-hot furnace and called: “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out.” Thereupon Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out of the fire. When the satraps, prefects, governors, and counselors 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. 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.

—Daniel 3:91-95

- *Reflection:* This passage is the conclusion of the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego being thrown into a furnace because they would not worship an idol. Has there been a time in your life where you have had to “stand up” for your faith? What was that like for you?