

BRAVE LIKE A GURKHA

The Gurkhas are an indigenous people largely located in midwestern and eastern Nepal. They made up military units in the Nepalese, Indian, and British armies and were known for being absolutely fearless. A great example of their bravery is from Tim Bowden's book, *One Crowded Hour*.¹

During the 1964 Malaysian and Indonesian conflict in Borneo, a Gurkha regiment in the British Army was fighting the Indonesians. They were asked if they would jump from the transport planes above the battlefield, if that turned out to be the best course of action.

They could refuse, since none of them had gone through any paratrooper training, but generally the Gurkhas never said no to anything they were asked to do. However, this time they said that they would need to talk it over.

The next day they went back to the British officers and said that after discussing it, they had agreed they could do it under specific conditions. The Gurkhas first requested that they be dropped over marshy or relatively soft ground, as they weren't experienced at falling. Next, "If possible," the Gurkhas continued, "we'd like the plane to fly as slowly as possible and no more than 100 feet from the ground when we jump." The British officer said they always fly slowly when dropping troops, but that 100 feet was much too close to the ground—the parachutes wouldn't have time to open.

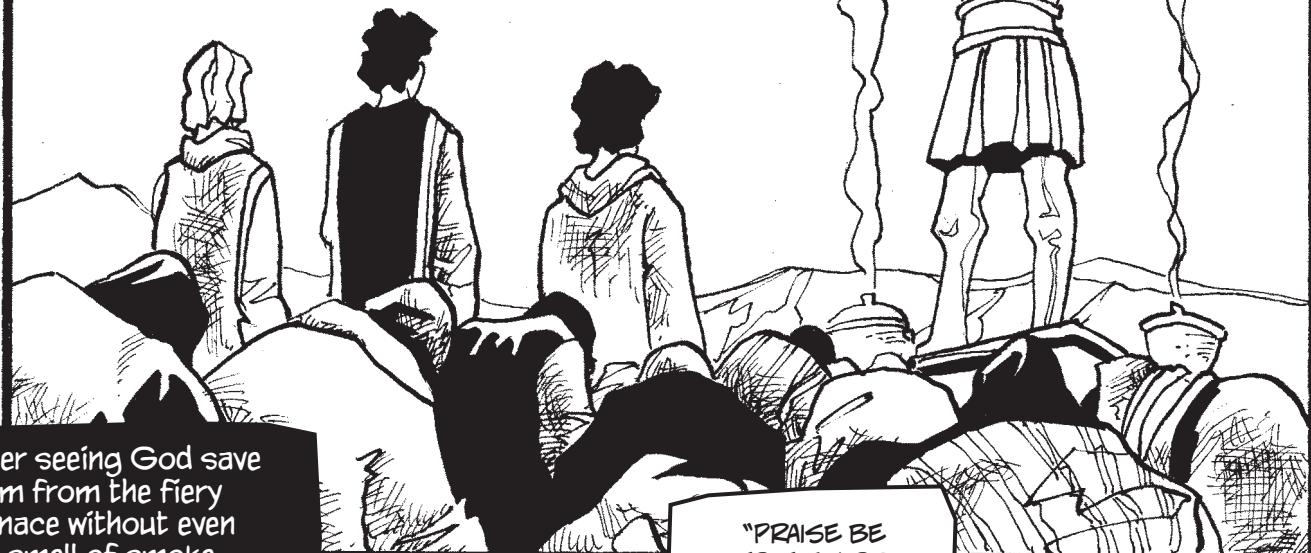
"In that case, you can drop us anywhere!" the Gurkhas said. "You hadn't mentioned the parachutes."



THE FIRST BIBLE STORY THAT COMES TO MIND WHEN THINKING OF BRAVERY AND COURAGE IS DANIEL'S THREE BEST BUDDIES.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego didn't know that God was going to bail them out when they refused to bow down to Nebuchadnezzar's idol.

They boldly said that even if God didn't rescue them, they still wouldn't bow down.



After seeing God save them from the fiery furnace without even the smell of smoke, 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."²

After that, the king declared it illegal to say anything against their God,

...and to sweeten the deal, he gave them all a promotion.

Can you imagine if they had decided that it would have been smarter to just bow down this one time? They would have missed out being a testimony of their faith to the whole kingdom, not to mention missing out on going down as examples of bravery and faith to all of us who read the Bible today.



Following in Jesus' footsteps includes being tolerant and understanding, turning the other cheek, and forgiving those that hurt us. All of that is important and a big part of what it means to be a Christian.

JESUS ALSO KNEW WHEN HE HAD TO SPEAK OUT AGAINST WRONGDOING.



Jesus talked to everyone who needed to hear what He had to say, and taught His disciples how to do the same.

He taught them to be wise and to be an example of their faith through their kindness and actions.

BY THIS SHALL ALL MEN KNOW THAT YE ARE MY DISCIPLES, IF YE HAVE LOVE ONE FOR ANOTHER.⁵

At the same time, when the crunch came, they knew when they had to stand up for their faith

—a faith that often inspired people because of their strength of character and fearlessness.

DO YOU REALIZE THAT YOU WILL BE STONED FOR SUCH BLASPHEMY?

YES, SIR. I DO.

WHAT'S SHE TAKING SUCH A BRAVE STAND FOR?"

SHE'S A CHRISTIAN.

If you are ever faced with needing to speak up against some wrongdoing or to stand firm in your belief, remember these encouraging words from Paul:

"BE ON YOUR GUARD; STAND FIRM IN THE FAITH; BE MEN OF COURAGE; BE STRONG."⁶

AND REMEMBER TO CALL ON JESUS, AS HE WILL GIVE YOU THE COURAGE YOU NEED!

Footnotes

¹ Tim Bowden, *One Crowded Hour* (Harper Collins, 1995)

² Daniel 3:28 NIV

³ Psalm 27:1 KJV

⁴ John 8:44 NLT

⁵ John 13:36 KJV

⁶ 1 Corinthians 16:13 NIV