

Vacation

The Fiery Furnace

Daniel 3:8-18 NLT: But some of the astrologers went to the king and informed on the Jews. They said to King Nebuchadnezzar, “Long live the king! You issued a decree requiring all the people to bow down and worship the gold statue when they hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes, and other musical instruments. That decree also states that those who refuse to obey must be thrown into a blazing furnace. But there are some Jews—Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego—whom you have put in charge of the province of Babylon. They pay no attention to you, Your Majesty. They refuse to serve your gods and do not worship the gold statue you have set up.” Then Nebuchadnezzar flew into a rage and ordered that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be brought before him. When they were brought in, Nebuchadnezzar said to them, “Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you refuse to serve my gods or to worship the gold statue I have set up? I will give you one more chance to bow down and worship the statue I have made when you hear the sound of the musical instruments. But if you refuse, you will be thrown immediately into the blazing furnace. And then what god will be able to rescue you from my power?” Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego replied, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God whom we serve is able to save us. He will rescue us from your power, Your Majesty. But even if he doesn’t, we want to make it clear to you, Your Majesty, that we will never serve your gods or worship the gold statue you have set up.”

LIFE GROUP / PERSONAL STUDY:

It’s vacation time and most people spend their vacations traveling. While some people enjoy returning to familiar places each year, others like to go some place they’ve never been before. This week, we’re traveling to Babylon - the site of the “fiery furnace,” which doesn’t sound exactly inviting, but it’s a wonderful place to learn some incredibly important lessons about God and that we can trust Him in the midst of even the most difficult circumstance. Let’s see what we can learn on our journey this week.

Read Daniel 3:1-7 NLT:

1A) Describe in detail the situation that the King of Babylon had set up. Verses 1-6

1B) PERSONAL: According to verse 7, what was the response and what do you find interesting about this?

2A) According to the astrologers in our focus passage, what was the response of Shadrach, Meschech and Abednego and what did they do about it? Verses 8-12

2B) How did King Nebuchadnezzar react? Verses 13-16

Read Daniel 3:17-18:

3A) How did the 3 Hebrew boys respond to the King's specific demands?

3B) PERSONAL: How does their response encourage you in dealing with whatever difficult situation you may be in right now?

Read Daniel 3:19-23:

4A) What was the King's next response and what happened because of his response?

4B) PERSONAL: Have you or have you ever been tempted to respond in a similar fashion? If so, what were the results?

What do you learn from this story about the dangers of this type of response?

Read Daniel 3:24-28:

5A) Describe what happened next. Verses 24-25

5B) PERSONAL: How does this help you understand that God's children do not go through trials alone?

5C) How does Psalm 9:10 confirm this promise?

6) Describe the miraculous ways that God protected Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and the way God was glorified. Verses 26-28

Read 2 Corinthians 4:7-15:

7A) How does the story of the "fiery furnace" demonstrate the truths of this passage - that even though we may feel helpless - we're not hopeless?

7B) PERSONAL: How do you think knowing the promises of God, studying the Bible, and spending time in prayer can help you to stand firm in your faith - even in the midst of a "fiery trial?"

ACT: Because of their faith in God, the 3 Hebrew boys found themselves in the midst of a seemingly hopeless situation, but their Trust in God and in His Plan helped them to remain strong in their faith - no matter what! They trusted in God's Plan so much that even if He had not rescued them from the fire, they were not going to give in to the demands of the world. They worshipped God alone and that must be our goal as well. We can trust in God's plan, trust in His People to stand with us, and trust in His Peace, which is beyond our understanding.

Daily Devotional: It always helps to look at the context of the passage. Then try to answer the following questions about the passage. Who is involved? What is going on? Where is the action taking place? When? How can this concept apply to my life? Why is it important? Also look for Commands, Warnings, and Examples to follow or not to follow.

- This week let's read various passages that describe the importance of trusting in God.

Monday:

Psalm 10:13-14 NLT

Why do the wicked get away with despising God? They think, "God will never call us to account." But you see the trouble and grief they cause. You take note of it and punish them. The helpless put their trust in you. You defend the orphans.

Tuesday:

Psalm 13:5 NLT

But I trust in your unfailing love. I will rejoice because you have rescued me.

Wednesday:

Psalm 25:2-3 NLT

I trust in you, my God! Do not let me be disgraced, or let my enemies rejoice in my defeat. No one who trusts in you will ever be disgraced, but disgrace comes to those who try to deceive others.

Thursday:

Psalm 28:7 NLT

The Lord is my strength and shield. I trust him with all my heart. He helps me, and my heart is filled with joy. I burst out in songs of thanksgiving.

Friday:

Psalm 34:10 NLT

Even strong young lions sometimes go hungry, but those who trust in the Lord will lack no good thing.

Saturday:

Psalm 37:3-5 NLT

Trust in the Lord and do good. Then you will live safely in the land and prosper. Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you your heart's desires. Commit everything you do to the Lord. Trust him, and he will help you.

Sunday:

Psalm 40:3-4 NLT

He has given me a new song to sing, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see what he has done and be amazed. They will put their trust in the Lord. Oh, the joys of those who trust the Lord, who have no confidence in the proud or in those who worship idols.

