

POWER HOUR

9/15/2024

Lesson Text:
Daniel 3:19-28

Background Scripture:
Isaiah 43:1-7

Devotional Reading:
Daniel 6:19-27

“DANIEL’S FRIENDS TRUST GOD”

NLT TRANSLATION

Golden Text: *Then Nebuchadnezzar said, “Praise to the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego! He sent his angel to rescue his servants who trusted in him. They defied the king’s command and were willing to die rather than serve or worship any god except their own God. Daniel 3:28 NLT*

Time: *about 587 B.C.*

Place: *Babylon*

Daniel 3:19-28 NLT

19 Nebuchadnezzar was so furious with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego that his face became distorted with rage. He commanded that the furnace be heated seven times hotter than usual. **20** Then he ordered some of the strongest men of his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and throw them into the blazing furnace. **21** So they tied them up and threw them into the furnace, fully dressed in their pants, turbans, robes, and other garments. **22** And because the king, in his anger, had demanded such a hot fire in the furnace, the flames killed the soldiers as they threw the three men in. **23** So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, securely tied, fell into the roaring flames. **24** But suddenly, Nebuchadnezzar jumped up in amazement and exclaimed to his advisers, “Didn’t we tie up three men and throw them into the furnace?” “Yes, Your Majesty, we certainly did,” they replied. **25** “Look!” Nebuchadnezzar shouted. “I see four men, unbound, walking around in the fire unharmed! And the fourth looks like a god!” **26** Then Nebuchadnezzar came as close as he could to the door of the flaming furnace and shouted: “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out! Come here!” So

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego stepped out of the fire. **27** Then the high officers, officials, governors, and advisers crowded around them and saw that the fire had not touched them. Not a hair on their heads was singed, and their clothing was not scorched. They didn't even smell of smoke! **28** Then Nebuchadnezzar said, "Praise to the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego! He sent his angel to rescue his servants who trusted in him. They defied the king's command and were willing to die rather than serve or worship any god except their own God.

AN ANGRY ENEMY—Daniel 3:19-23 Irrational fury (Daniel 3:19-20).

Can we see any reason why the Lord would allow these three dedicated men to go through this trial? "The devil tempts us to destroy our faith, but God tests us to develop our faith because a faith that can't be tested can't be trusted. False faith withers in times of trial, but true faith takes deeper root, grows, and brings glory to God. This explains why God permitted the three Hebrew men to be tested and then thrown into the fiery furnace" Nebuchadnezzar was furious with these men over their refusal to worship the image (Daniel 3:13). Still, when they were brought to him and he heard their determination to stay true to God and trust Him to deliver them from the threatened fire, he became even more so (vs. 19). Even his face was distorted by his rage. This was followed by a completely irrational order: to heat the furnace seven times hotter than normal. This was probably a proverbial expression meaning "to make it as hot as possible." Nebuchadnezzar's pride caused this ridiculous outburst. As king of the mighty Babylonian Empire, he demanded respect and honor. To have someone defy him was more than he could take. If Nebuchadnezzar had been rational in his thinking, he would have realized that making a furnace much hotter would serve only to bring a more rapid release from the pain of burning instead of prolonging the agony. A cooler furnace would be more effective in its torture. But the king gave his irrational command and quickly ordered some of his mighty military men to bind the three Israelites and toss them into the fiery furnace.

POINTS TO PONDER

1. Bold faith reveals and provokes God's enemies (Daniel 3:19).
2. Opposition is not always the result of our wrongdoing (vs. 20).
3. Our enemies cannot bind what God has set free (vs. 21-22).
4. Even in our greatest trials, God is present with us and is in control (vs. 23-25).
5. God's power and protection exceed our understanding (vs. 26).
6. Our trials provide opportunities to trust God and see His power at work in our lives (vs. 27).
7. God uses our trials for His glory so that even His enemies acknowledge His power (vs. 28).

CONCLUSION

The men in this week's lesson text were regular men trying to survive in an environment hostile to God. They were up against great opposition. It would have been easy to make an accommodation. That would have been the path of least resistance. These three could have said, "We can do this just this once. God knows we do not mean it, and He will forgive us. He will understand why we did it." That would have been the outwardly comfortable path to take. There will be times when God calls us to have great courage. As the time for His return draws closer, this will become even truer. Christ warned His disciples about this (John 15:18—16:4). We must be bold. As believers, we need to remember that God will provide for our every need (Philippians 4:19). That provision does not include merely material possessions; it includes the intangibles as well. He promised that we would not face anything alone (Hebrews 13:5-6). Is God calling you to something daunting? Is He asking you to take a risk? Answer His call! We do not need to be some special class of believers. All we need to do is have faith in Jesus. When we are lacking in courage, we need to trust Him to make it complete.

QUESTION(S)

- What did God accomplish in allowing His three servants to go through such a difficult trial?
- What caused the king to become even more angry than before?
- Why was Nebuchadnezzar's decree foolish?
- What indicates the king's eagerness in this matter, and what loss did this result in for him?
- What did the king initially see happening when the men landed in the furnace?
- What did he observe as he kept looking into the furnace?

ANTICIPATING THE NEXT LESSON

Next week's lesson is *"Daniel Prophesies the Son of Man"*

Lesson Text: Daniel 7:9-14