



THE LORD'S FLOCK GROWTH DIGEST

PASTORAL GROWTH SERIES

“REFINER’S FIRE”

(Pressure Series, Part 11)

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When we are with God, we walk with Him. He allows us to be tested but He will save us from harm. God uses problems not to burn us in the fiery furnace of trials but purposely to liberate us. It is important to look at the story of three young Judean men who were not afraid to stand for their God and who were severely punished for their belief (Daniel 3). They demonstrated their commitment and loyalty to God as compared to the Chaldeans who, upon the King’s order, bowed to his huge golden statue. Their convictions resulted in being saved and promoted to a higher position by God.

1. What were the convictions of the three friends, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego?

- 1.1 Obedience to God is unconditional (Rom. 13).
- 1.2 They trusted God’s ability to save them even though it would mean a contradiction in the natural laws of nature (Dn. 3:14-18).
- 1.3 They stood on their faith (Dn. 3:19).
- 1.4 They did not compromise (Heb. 10:26).
- 1.5 They refused to bow down before idols (Jas. 4:4; 2 Cor. 4:4; 1 Jn. 5:19).
- 1.6 They did not consider any excuses to save them from death because they were thinking about the glory of God.
- 1.7 They were calm and confident (Mt. 10:19-20).

2. What was the verdict facing the fiery furnace?

- 2.1 Furnace was made seven times hotter because King Nebuchadnezzar was furious (Dn. 3:19).
- 2.2 They were bound, dragged, and hurled to the fiery furnace (Dn. 3:20).

- 2.3 The description of their clothes emphasized the flammable nature of clothing (Dn. 3:21).
- 2.4 The soldiers carrying the three men were killed by the raging flames of the furnace, proof of the fierceness of the heat.
- 2.5 Into the midst of the fiery furnace, there was no possibility to escape (Dn. 3:23).
- 2.6 After the three (3) men were thrown into the fiery furnace, the King saw a fourth man that looked like a pre-incarnate vision of Jesus Christ (Dn. 3:27). Indeed, God protected them (Is. 43:2; Dt. 31:8).
- 2.7 The King was surprised that he heard them singing hymns of praises, blessing the Lord (Dn. 3:24-25), and then noticed that they were alive and walking.

3. What were the results of their obedience to God?

- 3.1 The three friends were recognized as outstanding because of their righteousness, loyalty, and integrity.
- 3.2 God was honored.
- 3.3 King Nebuchadnezzar was converted.
- 3.4 They were promoted by the King.

Conclusion:

If we stand for God, people will know and believe the God we serve when we joyfully praise and pray amid fiery trials. God used Daniel and his three friends to humble the King’s heart and lead him to a place where he would acknowledge the Lord’s right to reign and to rule in his heart as well. Hence, God will always be with those who obey and serve Him (Job 36:10-11).

Reflection:

1. To what idols do you bow down today?
2. Are you willing to stand for your faith amid world pressures?

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