

The Fiery Furnace

Daniel 3

Part 5

Introduction: Two weeks ago in our Daniel study we walked with Daniel's three friends as they were cast into the fiery furnace by the king's best military men. We considered how the king's anger cost him the best military men he had for they died because the fire was so hot. So, when we stopped, we left Daniel's friends in the furnace and today we are going to watch as they walk out of the furnace. Before we get to the verses before us tonight, I just need to remind all of us of the spiritual Truth that we find here. We can be doing everything correctly and walking in fellowship with the Lord and still find ourselves in furnaces of affliction. There is no promise that as believers we will not suffer in this world. The Bible teaches the opposite. We are told that as believers we will experience trials and storms. Let us consider a few verses.

2 Timothy 3:12

¹² *Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.*

James 1:2-4

² *My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;*

³ *Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.*

⁴ *But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.*

Job gives a general statement that is true of all people.

Job 5:6-7

⁶ *Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground;*

⁷ *Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward.*

From these verses as well as Genesis 3 where we find the announcement of the curse, we can know that problems are a part of life and to be a believe does not make us exempt.

The difference is that as believers we are called to glorify God in the furnaces of affliction.

1 Peter 4:11-14

¹¹ *If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

¹² *Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:*

¹³ *But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.*

¹⁴ *If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.*

Now let us get to our text for tonight.

➤ **The Blessings of the Furnace**

Notice Daniel 3:23-25

There are several points to consider in these verses.

1. The fourth man in the fire.

The king exclaimed to his servants that he saw 4 men in the fire, and they had only cast in 3. The king describes him as "like the Son of God." But we are missing something from the original language here. It actually reads "like a son of the gods." There are many who believe this is an angel that was sent from God to protect these men.

Notice Daniel 3:28

The king declares that God sent His angel to protect these men. Let us look at Daniel in the lion's den.

Daniel 6:20-22

²⁰ *And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: and the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?*

²¹ Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever.

²² My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.

Some teach that this is Michael the arch angel because he is the angel assigned to the people of Israel.

Revelation 12:3-7

³ And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.

⁴ And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

⁵ And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.

⁶ And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.

⁷ And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels.

I believe that the fourth Man in the fire was none other than the preincarnate Son of God. This is what is called a theophany. Let us notice some Old Testament examples of His appearance.

Exodus 3:1-2

Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb.

² And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed.

Joshua 5:13-15

¹³ And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?

¹⁴ And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my Lord unto his servant?

¹⁵ And the captain of the LORD's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so.

There are many appearances of Jesus Christ in the Old Testament. There is a passage in Isaiah that helps us to understand why the fourth Man in the fire was most likely the Lord.

Isaiah 43:1-3

But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.

² *When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.*

³ *For I am the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee.*

Application:

We know that when we go through the furnaces of life we are never alone.

Hebrews 13:5

⁵ *Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*

Isaiah 41:10, 17

¹⁰ *Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.*

¹⁷ When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the LORD will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.

Psalm 37:25-26

²⁵ I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

²⁶ He is ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed is blessed.

2. Would I be able to stand steadfast as Daniel's friends did?

When I read this passage, I cannot help but wonder what I would do. We have faced pressure in life, but we have never faced anything such as this furnace. We would all want to stand and be faithful just as these men, but would we have what it would take? The answer is, YES!" God gives to us the grace we need for every situation in life.

John 1:16

¹⁶ And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.

Remember when we studied this? The idea here is that we receive grace upon grace.

2 Corinthians 12:7-9

⁷ And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

⁸ For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

⁹ And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

God has a purpose when He allows us to enter the furnaces and He is in control of the entire situation.

Malachai 3:3

³ And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness.

Notice the words of Warren Wiersbe.

"When God puts His own people into the furnace, He keeps His eye on the clock and His hand on the thermostat. He knows how long and how much. (If we rebel, He may have to reset the clock; but if we submit, He will not permit us to suffer one minute too long. The important thing is that we learn the lesson He wants to teach us and that we bring glory to Him alone.) We may question why He does it to begin with, or why He doesn't turn down the heat or even turn it off; but our questions are only evidences of unbelief. In Job 23:10 is the answer: "But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." Gold does not fear the fire. The furnace can only make the gold purer and brighter."

3. The results of the fire.

Notice Daniel 3:23, 25 again.

When the men went into the fire they were bound but when the king looked in, they had been loosed.

Application:

This is what the trials of life often do. They set us free from that which we struggle to let go of. An example would be our self-confidence. Trials will many times come from the Lord to teach us that we cannot fix every situation in life but that we are to trust in Him when we are faced with situations that are beyond our control. Notice the words of F. B. Myer.

"This is what trials have often done for us. We had become conscious of the binding effect of our own habits which we had permitted as comparatively innocent; but gradually the conviction grew that they were amongst the weights that should be laid aside. Yet they clung to us until some fiery trial befell us, and from that hour, through the grace of the Holy Spirit, we were free. Do not fear the fire. It cannot hurt one hair of your head, or leave the smell of burning on you; but it will eat out the alloy, and gnaw away the iron bands that bound you."

The trials of fire should cause us to trust less in our ability and to trust more in our Lord. The fires are often designed to burn away the dross from our lives.

4. A testimony to others.

Notice Daniel 3:26-30

Every time Daniel and his friends stood stedfast for the Lord there was another seed planted in the heart of the king.

Conclusion/application:

We do not know who is watching us when we are in the furnaces of life, but we can be sure there is someone watching and the faith we exercise is a major part of our testimony.