

GOD IS ABLE ... To Deliver from Fiery Trials!

Daniel 3:16-18

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Introduction:

- I. Matthew 26:31-35 Peter's words are often repeated by Christians looking at the trials of others and with a smug attitude say, "Well! IF I ever have to struggle with that problem, I will not doubt God's care!" We are thus often just as confident as Peter until some trial strikes us! Then, just as Peter, we do what we said we would *never* do! (Matthew 25:56b, 69-75).

- II. How do you face trials in life? How do you react to difficulties? What would you do if Christ asked you to die for Him?
 1. Our text looks at three Jewish teenagers facing a great threat.
 2. They had been taken by King Nebuchadnezzar and ordered to bow down to a golden image. They refused. The King was in a good mood and gave them a second chance. Again they refused.
 3. Their commitment to God was going to cost them their lives (3:15b, 19, 20).

- III. You and I will never face a literal fiery furnace, but we face problems that seem just as threatening – peer pressures inviting compromise; an unbelieving spouse mocking our Christian convictions and commitments; financial matters that tempt compromise in ethics. Look at these three heroes and discover what they did to find deliverance from difficulties in life.

Body:

- I. They were strong in understanding God's principles.
 - A. Daniel 3:16 – when asked to compromise, they needed no time to think, they instantly knew what to do.
 1. Not time for cheap talk but for strong actions.
 2. They knew what God wanted and they would obey.
 3. The King offered a choice, but there was no choice – these had already made their choice! (Exodus 20:4, 5).
 4. They could have rationalized and compromised – "We will bow the knee, but not the heart!" But they knew that even bending a knee would compromise their influence!
 5. These had learned God's will and committed their hearts to its principles and refused to violate those principles!

 - B. This commitment to God's principles is essential if we are to be delivered from trials.
 1. Acts 4:19,20; 5:29 – Commitment to God's principles does not mean you will be free from struggles, but it will assure you that your struggles have purpose and a reward!
 2. How strong are you in these Scriptural principles? Do you see these as holy laws

that must not be compromised or violated?

3. Commitment to purpose is what gives us strength to face trials (1 Corinthians 15:58; 1 Peter 5:8-10).
4. Maturity in God's Word is often the difference between being a victor OVER life's struggles or a victim OF life's struggles!

II. They were confident in God's Power!

A. Daniel 3:7 – Two Vital facts are discovered

1. "Our God" – These knew God and this knowledge helped them face their fiery trial.
2. "Whom we serve" – They had served God and as a result knew His power.
3. Their words show how confident they were in God's power so they defied the King's commands!

B. When we face struggles and problems in life we must TRUTH God's power!

1. Life's problems emphasize just how weak we really are – we do not have the strength in ourselves to overcome (John 14:1,2).
2. We sing, "Trust and Obey" and often when struggles arise we fail to follow what we sing.
3. Trusting God is difficult!
 - a. We struggle with daily cares – health, stress and anxiety over the economy, marriage and children, church conflicts, work conflicts! We fail to trust God to help us in these problems and feel that we must do all the work.
 - b. We struggle with answers to prayers – we pray about a matter but do we really believe God will answer?
 - c. The difficulty of trusting God is overcome with the confidence of Daniel 3:17.
4. A trusting confidence in God is possible ONLY as we study God's Word. Surely these three teens remembered Bible stories of how God had rewarded those who trust in Him during life's trials.
 - a. Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac
 - b. Pharaoh's order for all Heb boy babies to be killed.
 - c. Moses' salvation by Pharaoh's daughter at the Nile.
 - d. The crossing of the Red Sea by Israel.
5. History tell us that God is able to do today what He has always done. These facts are written so that we can use this history to build trust in God! (Isaiah 25:1; 2 Peter 3:9).

III. They were submissive to God's plans!

A. Daniel 3:18 – Their great faith trusted that God would do the best for them.

1. Their words are not contradictory or expressing doubt.
2. Great faith, the kind of faith that overcomes struggles, believes that God will do the very best thing regardless of what happens.
3. They prayed to God but left the outcome of the pray for God to determine!

B. Some Christians fail to understand this point.

1. They cannot see how God can do anything good when things are so bad in their lives. They need to remember how the sufferings of Job, David, Paul, and Christ brought great blessings.
 2. When you face great struggles, is your faith strong enough to leave the results in God's hands? If God does not stop the suffering, will your faith give up on God?
 - a. If you are praying about a matter and it seems in harmony with God's will, but you do not receive an answer – does your disappointment turn into doubt?
 - b. Let your faith be strengthened by: Paul's struggles (2 Corinthians 12:7-10); Job's faith (Job 13:15); and, Christ's example (Luke 22:42).
- C. Sometimes God's plans are clear but often they are vague and mysterious. We must learn to trust in the knowledge that God's plans are the best for us even when we do not understand (2 Corinthians 5:7).

Conclusion:

- I. These three teens faced a fiery trial and came through it with great blessings (Daniel 3:27). What can we learn from them?
 1. We will face severe trials in life that frighten us but God will never abandon us! (Isaiah 43:2).
 2. We cannot avoid fiery trials – These three had to go “into” the furnace but God delivered them (Acts 14:22).
 3. We bring glory to God's Name when we face struggles with a confident trust that God's Will is being done and His strength will help us endure.
- II. Proverbs 3:5 – Let all rejoice that God is able to deliver us from fiery trials!

She was only a tiny girl and not accustomed to traveling. She was on a train that had to cross two wide rivers and several wide streams. She was afraid of water and feared the train could not cross the rivers. As the train drew near she saw that a bridge spanned the water and while the danger of the water still existed she was able to pass safely over the danger. Every time the train neared water she saw a bridge. She leaned back and relaxed saying, “Somebody has out bridges for us all the way!” That is how we find trials in life – they first come and cause us to be fearful but then we discover that God has built bridges so that we can be delivered from the danger and find safety!