

# Daniel 3:22

by Chuck Smith

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*God sometimes allows us to go through hard times, but He is always with us, and uses the fire to refine and purify us, and to make us a witness to others.*

**Scripture:** Daniel 3:16

**Topics:** "Faith in Trials", "God's Presence in Hardship"

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## Description

Chuck Smith preaches on the story of the three Hebrew children who refused to bow to King Nebuchadnezzar's golden image, emphasizing their faith in God's ability to deliver them from the fiery furnace. He highlights that while God may not always deliver us from trials, He promises to be with us in them, using the example of Isaiah's assurance that we will not be burned in the fire. The sermon illustrates that God allows trials for a purpose, often to refine us and to demonstrate His power to others, as seen in Nebuchadnezzar's eventual recognition of God's sovereignty. Smith encourages believers to stand firm in their faith, even in the face of loneliness and uncertainty, knowing that Jesus is present in our struggles.

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## Transcript

With You In The Fire

- I. The Story of the three Hebrew children.
  - A. The great image of gold in the plain of Dura.
    1. The commandment to bow and worship the image.
    2. The penalty for refusal was to be cast into the burning fiery furnace.
  - B. The disobedience of the three Hebrew children.
    1. Nebuchadnezzar's rage and fury at the report.
    2. The commandment to bring them before him.
    3. The offer of a second chance.

4. The rejection of the offer.

5. "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of your hand. Even if He doesn't, we still will not serve your gods, or bow down to the image."

6. The king was full of fury, and ordered the furnace heated 7 times hotter than it had ever been heated before.

C. The binding of the three Hebrew children and casting them into the burning fiery furnace.

1. The death of the men who cast them in.

2. The great miracle of God.

3. The king was astonished as he looked into the fire and asked, "Did we not cast three men bound into the furnace?" They answered him true, and then he declared, "I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and the face of the fourth is like the Son of God."

II. God does not always deliver us from the fire, He sometimes has a purpose for allowing us to go into the fire. A. We would surely prefer it if He would deliver us from the fire. B. As the nation was facing the captivity, the Lord said to the people through Isaiah the prophet, "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you, and the rivers shall not overflow you, when you walk through the fire, you will not be burned, neither shall the flame be kindled upon you." 1. I wonder if the three Hebrew children were thinking about these verses, as they were being threatened by the king? 2.

Notice that the Lord did not say that they would not be facing these hardships, but that He would be with them in their hardships. C. What possible purpose could God have in allowing the three Hebrew children to be cast into the fiery furnace? 1. God had chosen that the nation of Israel should be a light unto the Gentiles. 2. In their turning from God to idolatry, they were no longer a witness to the Gentile world. 3. God Himself will give a witness to this Gentile king. a. In threatening the three Hebrew children with the fiery furnace, the king asked, "And who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?" b.

The three Hebrew children in their response said, "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from your burning fiery furnace." What God? Our God! 4. God showed the king what God was able to deliver from

him. 5. The upshot of the whole issue is that Nebuchadnezzar made a decree to all the people of every nation and language, that if anyone spoke against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, they would be cut in pieces, and their houses would be made a dunghill; because there is no other god that can deliver like Him.

D. Peter tells us not to consider it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try us as though some strange thing has happened to us. 1. God often uses the fiery experiences of life to purge and purify us. 2. He speaks of the refining of gold and silver by the fire. 3. He often uses the refining process of fire in our lives. 4. It is never to destroy, only to burn out the impurities. 5. And when through the fire, thy pathway shall lie, My grace all sufficient shall be your supply, The flames shall not hurt you, I only design, Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.

E. Paul the Apostle was allowed to get into some very hard and discouraging experiences. 1. His addressing of the multitude from the porch of the Antonia fortress. a. The fulfillment of his life's ambition. b. He began by saying, I know how you feel, I was one of you. I was persecuting the Christians unto death, I was binding them and casting them into prison. c. When he got to the place in his testimony where he told them about praying in the temple and going into a trance the Lord warned him to get out of there for they would not receive his testimony.

Paul argued with the Lord declaring that they knew him and how zealous he was for the law, even voting for Stephen's death. The Lord said, "Depart, for I will send you far from here unto the Gentiles." When they heard the word Gentiles, they went into a rage screaming, "Kill him, it is not fit that he should live." d. He was rescued by the Roman garrison, and brought into the protective custody of the Roman fortress. e. How discouraged he must have been, his dreams were shattered. f.

The next day as he was brought before the high priest and declared that he had always lived in good conscience before God, the high priest commanded him to be hit in the mouth, to which Paul replied, and God will smite you, you white washed wall. Paul again threw the crowd into an uproar, and was remanded to the prison the second night. g. It was the second night that Paul had an unusual visitor in his prison cell for the Lord stood by him and said, "Be of good cheer Paul, for as you have testified of Me in Jerusalem, so must you bear witness of Me in Rome." h. Paul was in the fire of discouragement and the Lord was there to encourage him. i. Paul saw himself as a total failure, but the Lord re-commissioned him.

III. The various fires that we are called to go through.

A. We have already mentioned discouragement.

B. The fiery trial of loneliness.

1. Friends and family have deserted you.

2. They do not understand your faith in Jesus Christ, they feel uncomfortable around you.

3. Satan suggests that if you would just shut up about your faith and drink and party with them, bow to their god Bacchus, that you will be accepted again by them.

4. Perhaps they have even said to you. "You aren't any fun any more."

5. The temptation to bow can be very strong, but if you refuse to bow, you will find that the Lord will be with you in the hour of great loneliness. Someone has said that you must get alone to discover that you are never alone.

C. The fiery trial of the uncertainty of the future.

1. You are wanting to get married, you don't like the prospect of spending your future alone.

2. The right one has not come along yet, and you are beginning to wonder if they even exist.

3. Satan may be suggesting that you compromise your commitment to purity, bow down and worship his image of Venus, and you can have all kinds of dates. If you don't bow, you will go through the burning fiery agony of being single all your life.

4. I would like to suggest that if you bow, you will burn, but if you don't bow, the Lord will be with you and see you through the fire, and He will bring the right one across your path.

5. Oh the life long pain and misery people have brought into their lives by bowing to Venus.

D. It is true that God can keep you from the fire, and He often does. But if you are in the fire for His sake, because you refused to bow to the worlds images, you will discover that you are not alone in the flame. Jesus our great high priest who

went through the fire for us will be with you to preserve you.

It is always such a witness to see someone emerge from the fire without even the smell of smoke.

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