

When The Lion's Den Cannot Be Avoided - I

Introduction and Review

- Last week we observed Shadrach, Meshach & Abednego face their trial of the fiery furnace in Daniel 3.
- We saw that a powerful idolatrous world demanded worship & threatened these 3 believers with death for noncompliance.
- We also saw that their unwillingness to compromise led to an outrageous attempt to make a public example of them in death.
- God did not keep them **FROM** the fire, but He protected them **IN** the fire & brought them **OUT** of the fire.

I. Daniel Brought To Babylon

- A. The Lord uses the enemy to discipline His people (v. 1-2)
*All the events of history are under God's control – "the Lord gave" (v. 2; Is. 45:7). He rules over individuals & nations. God is very patient, but He will judge & discipline His people for unrepentant sin (2Chr. 36:5-7). Discipline proves the love of God for His people & is a necessary aspect of learning to obey God (Heb. 12:6; Ps. 119:67). **Believers are to trust in God's rule even when disaster happens to us!***
- B. The Lord uses the enemy to care for His people (v. 3-7)
*This world's system is looking for future leaders among God's people – believers are honest, loyal & faithful. While taking care of God's people, the world attempts to indoctrinate & win over the believer – worldly name, education & lifestyle. **External changes for work & other duties in life do not necessarily affect the believer's heart (2Tim. 1:12b).***

II. Daniel Living in Babylon

- A. The Lord gives Daniel conviction (v. 8)
Living in an unbelieving world, believers must determine which things compromise their faith & testimony. Eating the king's food = covenant friendship. Daniel could not make this compromise. Conviction & faith must come from the truth of the word of God (Rom. 6:17; 10:17). The believer must graciously resist the temptation of fringe benefits that cause us to compromise – "he asked" (Rom. 12:2).

- B. The Lord gives Daniel favor (v. 9-14a)
God controls the thoughts & actions of those in authority over believers. Favor is special kindness & blessing shown to someone. When necessary, God intervenes to cause those in authority to make exceptions for us because of our convictions – job, school, groups, etc.

III. Daniel Tested in Babylon

- A. The Lord rewards Daniel's faithfulness (v. 14-16)
God supernaturally sustained & improved Daniel's physical health. God proves that His will, done His way will yield godly results that no one can deny. The worldly plan for God's people was changed because God honored Daniel's conviction & faithfulness with supernatural results.
- B. The Lord gives Daniel special abilities (v. 17-21)
Special intellectual abilities to learn & understand truth come from the Lord. He gave these special intellectual abilities to all 4 teenagers. But He also gave Daniel the special ability to understand visions & dreams. These special abilities are given to distinguish the believer as God's competent representative on our jobs, public offices, committees, etc.; God enables believers to be competent in math, science, music, medicine, education, technicians, specialty skills, etc. (Pr. 18:16; 22:29).

APPL: Every good gift & every perfect gift... (Jas. 1:17). The best gift & the most perfect gift is the Giver Himself, Jesus Christ. He humbled Himself & willingly came into this world dominated by His enemy. He submitted Himself to the authority of His parents as He increased in wisdom & in stature & in favor with God & man. He is the perfect example of living by conviction & faith, never compromising regardless of the level of temptation. So as we look at Daniel, we can see that his life was a type or a shadow to prepare for the Perfect One who would live the truly perfect & righteous life so that we thru faith in Him might become the righteousness of God (2Co. 5:21)!

CONCLUSION

So then my beloved brother or sister in July 2011, it is no longer Daniel of the tribe of Judah that must stand for righteousness, but the responsibility now rest with you and me. We now must trust God's rule even when disaster happens in our homes, family & lives. We now must learn to live in this unbelieving world without making compromises that will damage our faith or our testimony for Christ. We must stand firm in our faith & trust that God's will, done God's way will yield godly results that no one can deny. The name, reputation & glory of Jesus Christ is worth this kind of lifestyle. Therefore like Daniel, today let's resolve that we will not defile ourselves with worldly compromises with our mouths, eyes, ears, hands, feet, etc. Rom. 6:12-13; 12:1.

If you are not a Christian, there's only one thing that you should resolve to do today. You must put your trust in Jesus Christ as Savior. You must believe that He alone can save you from the penalty of your sins...

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[Prepared by Willie D. Woodmore](#)