

1. Last week I taught Daniel chapter three verse seventeen; I then began teaching the Doctrine of Faith Rest.

2. Before continuing that study I want to give you an expanded translation of Daniel chapter three verses seven through seventeen.

Dan 3:7 The band began to play and all the people fell down and worshipped the image as commanded except for Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

Dan 3:8 Several members of a priestly caste peeked and noticed that there were three very conspicuous Jews who did not bow so they asked and received an audience with Nebuchadnezzar. One of the jealous priest reported that Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego did not bow.

Dan 3:9 They greeted the King and said "O King live forever.

Dan 3:10 You have made a decree that at the sound of the band every man shall fall down and worship the golden image.

Dan 3:11 And anyone who fails to fall down and worship shall be thrown into the burning fiery furnace.

Dan 3:12 There are certain Jews whom you appointed over the affairs of the province of Babylon that have not shown respect to the king. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego neither serve your gods nor worship the golden image."

Dan 3:13 This caused Nebuchadnezzar to be hot with anger; the King was livid so he commanded his palace guards to bring Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego to the palace.

Dan 3:14 Nebuchadnezzar asked the three boys, "did you intentionally not bow down to worship my god? I hope you now realize that all of you are in serious trouble; the mere act of refusing to bow and worship, whether intentional or not is a serious offense.

Dan 3:15 If your actions were not deliberate then the next time you hear the music be sure you fall down and worship the image and if you do I will forget the whole thing; be certain however, if you do not obey, you will be thrown into the fiery furnace and I can assure there is no god anywhere powerful enough to save you.

Dan 3:16 Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not even have to consider our answer."

Dan 3:17 O King, supreme ruler of Babylon, if it is our God's desire to deliver us, He is infinitely able to rescue us from that fiery furnace; we know as a fact that our Jehovah God has the power to do whatever He chooses to do."

3. Now let's continue our study of verse eighteen. The verse in the KJV reads:

Dan 3:18 But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

1. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego understood the faith rest drill.

2. Believing God and God's Word had become a way of life for these three young men. By now the three men are probably about 35 to 37 years of age.

3. Let's continue with the Doctrine of Faith Rest. Last week when time ran out I was about to review our security in Christ.

3.1 In Romans chapter eight we are given assurance of our security.

Rom 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Rom 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Rom 8:30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

Rom 8:31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

Rom 8:32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

Rom 8:33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.

Rom 8:34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

Rom 8:35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

Rom 8:36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

Rom 8:37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

Rom 8:38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

Rom 8:39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

3.2 We should give thanks concerning all things because it was God Himself Who designed our very own spiritual life.

1Th 5:18 give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

3.3 Every believer is urged to get under the authority of his or her Pastor and cast all cares upon our gracious Father.

1Pe 5:2 Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers--not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve;

1Pe 5:3 not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.

1Pe 5:4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

1Pe 5:5 Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

1Pe 5:6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.

1Pe 5:7 Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

3.4 When in trouble we must not assume we know it all; because we certainly don't say the Lord.

Jer 33:2 "This is what the LORD says, he who made the earth, the LORD who formed it and established it--the LORD is his name:

Jer 33:3 'Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.'

3.5 Prayer when properly applied will facilitate a recovery from anxiety.

Phi 4:6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

Phi 4:7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

3.6 No matter what the fight or the odds, the battle is the Lord's.

1Sa 17:47 And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the LORD'S, now Goliath God will give you into our hands.

3.7 God's timing is perfect and this certainly includes our death.

2Ti 4:6 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

2Ti 4:7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

2Ti 4:8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

3.8 Fear is not of God as we have seen in 2Ti 1:7; the answer to fear is a proper mental attitude based on doctrine.

1Co 2:5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

3.9 How we handle a normal day then is how we handle an abnormal day.

Psa 56:3 When I am afraid, I will trust in you.

Psa 56:4 In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I will not be afraid...

Isa 26:3 Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

Isa 26:4 Trust ye in the LORD forever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength:

3.10 One of our major faith rest principles must be our belief in eternal security.

3.10.1 If we doubt our salvation we become a casualty in the angelic conflict; doubting the efficacy of Christ and magnifying our self importance.

Eph 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

Eph 2:9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

3.11 If we worry over sin in time we also are casualties for we are in essence doubting the Word of God and His power to keep us.

3.11.1 Sin is no longer an issue, they were nailed to the cross and when we cite them to God as a believer, they are forgotten and we are forgiven and purified.

1Jo 2:2 Christ is the propitiation for our sins, but not for ours only, but for the sins of the entire world.

1Jo 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

1Jo 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1Jo 1:10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

1Jo 2:1 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

Phi 3:13 ... forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

Rom 8:32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

3.12 We therefore should cling to promises like:

Rom 8:31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

Phi 4:19 But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

1Co 10:13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

Eph 3:20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

Jud 1:24 Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,

Jud 1:25 To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

Mat 10:30 And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

Mat 10:31 So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

Pro 3:6 in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

Pro 14:26 He who fears the LORD has a secure fortress, and for his children it will be a refuge.

Psa 118:8 It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in man.

Psa 118:9 It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in princes.

Isa 30:20 Although the Lord gives you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, your teachers will be hidden no more; with your own eyes you will see them.

Isa 30:21 Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it."

4. An expanded translation of verse eighteen might read:

Expanded Translation:

Dan 3:18 But even if Jehovah God doesn't choose to save us, we still won't worship your gods and the idolatrous image you have erected.

5. Since we have been away for awhile, let me sum up the attitude of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego before getting into verse nineteen.

6. The brave boys did not seek to earn or deserve deliverance, nor did they attempt to coerce or bribe God; they were content for Him to determine their fate.

1Pe 4:19 So then, those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.

7. These Jewish believers were fantastic! Few believers facing death consider the fact that God alone determines life and death.

Psa 31:15 My times are in your hands; deliver me from my enemies and from those who pursue me.

8. Any hope that Nebuchadnezzar might have had regarding their repentance soon vanished. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego did not even try to save themselves!

9. There was no mincing of words; there was no double-talk or attempt to placate the furious king. Without a moment's hesitation they said, "We will not serve nor worship the golden image."

10. It is interesting to note that while idolatry had led Judah into captivity under the fifth cycle of discipline (Jer. 17:1-3), it afforded these three believing Jews an opportunity to take a positive stand for God.

Jer 17:1 "Judah's sin is engraved with an iron tool, inscribed with a flint point, on the tablets of their hearts and on the horns of their altars.

Jer 17:2 Even their children remember their altars and Asherah poles beside the spreading trees and on the high hills.

Jer 17:3 My mountain in the land and your wealth and all your treasures I will give away as plunder, together with your high places, because of sin throughout your country.

11. Because they served the Lord day by day, these men had the moral courage to defy the king's order. This was only possible because of the "backbone" in their souls; otherwise, they would have fallen apart and rationalized outward obeisance in order to save their lives.

11.1 Many years later Paul would express this same attitude in Phi 1:21: "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

12. This scenario is a good example of a principle found in Psalm 76:10: "For the wraths of man shall praise Thee."

12.1 Jesus Christ controls history despite the fact that Satan rules the world. The evils perpetrated by Satan often fail to achieve his ends and instead provide opportunities for the truth to be revealed and sent throughout the world.

13. God may exploit these opportunities directly, as when He sent fire from heaven in answer to Elijah's prayer (1 Kings 18:21-39).

1Ki 18:21 Elijah went before the people and said, "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him." But the people said nothing.

1Ki 18:22 Then Elijah said to them, "I am the only one of the LORD'S prophets left, but Baal has four hundred and fifty prophets.

1Ki 18:23 Get two bulls for us. Let them choose one for themselves, and let them cut it into pieces and put it on the wood but not set fire to it. I will prepare the other bull and put it on the wood but not set fire to it.

1Ki 18:24 Then you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the LORD. The god who answers by fire--he is God." Then all the people said, "What you say is good."

1Ki 18:25 Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Choose one of the bulls and prepare it first, since there are so many of you. Call on the name of your god, but do not light the fire."

1Ki 18:26 So they took the bull given them and prepared it. Then they called on the name of Baal from morning till noon. "O Baal, answer us!" they shouted. But there was no response; no one answered. And they danced around the altar they had made.

1Ki 18:27 At noon Elijah began to taunt them. "Shout louder!" he said. "Surely he is a god! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or traveling. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened."

1Ki 18:28 So they shouted louder and slashed themselves with swords and spears, as was their custom, until their blood flowed.

1Ki 18:29 Midday passed, and they continued their frantic prophesying until the time for the evening sacrifice. But there was no response, no one answered, no one paid attention.

1Ki 18:30 Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come here to me." They came to him, and he repaired the altar of the LORD, which <sup>was</sup> in ruins.

1Ki 18:31 Elijah took twelve stones, one for each of the tribes descended from Jacob, to whom the word of the LORD had come, saying, "Your name shall be Israel."

1Ki 18:32 With the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD, and he dug a trench around it large enough to hold thirteen quarts of seed.

1Ki 18:33 He arranged the wood, cut the bull into pieces and laid it on the wood. Then he said to them, "Fill four large jars with water and pour it on the offering and on the wood."

1Ki 18:34 "Do it again," he said, and they did it again. "Do it a third time," he ordered, and they did it the third time.

1Ki 18:35 The water ran down around the altar and even filled the trench.

1Ki 18:36 At the time of sacrifice, the prophet Elijah stepped forward and prayed: "O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command.

1Ki 18:37 Answer me, O LORD, answer me, so these people will know that you, O LORD, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again."

1Ki 18:38 Then the fire of the LORD fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench.

1Ki 18:39 When all the people saw this, they fell prostrate and cried, "The LORD--he is God! The LORD--he is God!"

13.1 Rather than the spectacular, God more often than not, uses these opportunities by providing Bible doctrine to the believer.

14. Under severe pressure, the believer's inner strength becomes evident. The truth in the souls of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego was manifested before the idol which was designed to obscure the truth.

15. In contrast, what about the person who has everything money can buy, and yet has nothing? A look at Nebuchadnezzar gives the answer and furnishes us a pattern of misery-a pattern to be avoided!

16. This truly powerful man ruled an empire which covered several million square miles. He was wealthy beyond calculation; and humanly speaking, he lacked nothing-that is, nothing but happiness!

17. The king's unhappiness may have begun with his nightmares which had earlier robbed him of his sleep. No sooner was this situation resolved than he became inflated with pride and was again in real trouble.

18. He bungled the opportunity to have genuine happiness when Daniel presented the Gospel to him; he had seen the power of God and recognized it, but ego blinded him to his need of salvation!

19. As Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego stood before Nebuchadnezzar; they saw a miserable man angry, hostile, implacable and filled with mental attitude sins.

19.1 His fury at their pronouncement may have been heightened by the obvious fact that they were happy!

20. There is a principle here to be noted: doctrine in the soul makes the difference between misery and happiness. Three believers with maximum doctrine were very happy while facing death.

20.1 One king, minus the Lord, minus doctrine and orientation to grace, equals misery.

21. Let's assume that Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego had compromised. What would have happened?

21.1 They would have been delivered from punishment by death and could have gone back to their province and lived happily ever after.

22. But do you really think they could have? Inner happiness doesn't come from compromising, inner happiness comes from doctrine in the right lobe where it can be used as a problem solving device.

23. These three believers took a stand on two issues-idolatry and separation of Church and State.

23.1 They were right in what they did, and doctrine in their souls made them happy even though they had apparently sealed their doom!

23.2 Confronted with such fearless resistance, the king was further enraged.

24. Let me again give you the expanded translation of verse eighteen:

Expanded Translation:

Dan 3:18 But even if Jehovah God doesn't choose to save us, we still won't worship your gods and the idolatrous image you have erected.

25. Now let's see what we can learn from verse nineteen:

Dan 3:19 Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: therefore he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace seven times more than it was wont to be heated.

Principles:

1. So furious was Nebuchadnezzar that the very form of his face changed. This means that in a matter of minutes his mental attitude became so violent that he lost his imperial demeanor.

1.1 By mentioning his abnormal facial contractions, it is clear that he also lost complete control of his emotions.

2. Nebuchadnezzar, who had conquered the world and ruled a great empire, could not rule his emotions.

2.1 Crazy with rage he ordered inordinate heat be applied to the furnace; not just more than the furnace had been heated but seven times more.

Pro 25:28 Like a city whose walls are broken down is a man who lacks self-control.

3. At this point his lack of control bordered on madness. Not once did it occur to him that his precipitous command might endanger the lives of his loyal subjects.

3.1 Ironically enough, neither would increasing the heat add to the discomfort of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

4. Before we move forward let me give you an expanded translation of verse nineteen:

Expanded Translation:

Dan 3:19 Nebuchadnezzar's face twisted with anger at the response from the three young men. He shouted an order "heat the furnace seven times hotter than it has ever been heated!"

5. And now for a second command--verse twenty:

Dan 3:20 And he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace.

Principles:

1. The word translated "The most mighty men", is the Chaldean equivalent of Geber in the Hebrew meaning "mighty warriors." They were then the best soldiers in Nebuchadnezzar's army; the Chaldean word for "mighty men" similarly means heroes, or men proven in combat.

1.1 They were brave, faithful men whose lives would be sacrificed because their king had lost all reason!

1.2 These mighty men were his personal body guards.

2. Remember, loss of stability and poise precludes clear thinking; and when national leaders are sloppy thinkers, there is always needless slaughter!

3. Some of the bravest men in the history of the United States of America died before WWII really got started! Why?

3.1 Because of a lack of clear thinking on the part of our national leaders the country failed to prepare in time of peace for war.

4. It seems that we never learn. Since desert storm and George Herbert Bush's grand announcement of a "new world order" the United States of America has cut its military in order to spend a "peace dividend."

5. Strong militaries prevent war and weak militaries cause war. This is a Biblical principle.

5.1 Even with a strong military there must also be a resolve to use it; otherwise its existence will prove to be only a little deterrent.

6. Before we leave verse twenty let me give you an expanded translation:

Expanded Translation:

Dan 3:20 The King obviously wanted his order carried out immediately; so he ordered the special body guards who stood by to bind the hands and feet of the young Jewish hostages and take the three of them to the furnace where they were to be cremated alive.

7. Now for the execution of the order; no pun intended.

Dan 3:21 Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

1. "Then these men" refers to the three believers who were immediately bound in preparation for their execution.
2. The clothing of the three young men is mentioned because the order was accomplished right then and there.
3. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego as earlier noted had great respect for their God established ruler.
4. Accordingly they had come before his presence properly dressed.

Dan 2:49 Moreover, at Daniel's request the king appointed Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego administrators over the province of Babylon, while Daniel himself remained at the royal court.

52 Notice how this verse is translated in the NIV:

Dan 3:21 So these men, wearing their robes, trousers, turbans and other clothes, were bound and thrown into the blazing furnace.

6. Their clothing, I suspect was also specifically mentioned, because in their deliverance these garments would neither be scorched nor have the smell of fire on them!
7. The king's command was obeyed; and Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were cast into the furnace!
8. Nebuchadnezzar had directed that the furnace be heated to seven times its normal temperature, and now his flurry of anger will reap its reward:

9. Before we see that "reward" let me give you an expanded translation of verse twenty-one:

Expanded Translation:

Dan 3:21 The special guard unit immediately complied with the King's order, they tied up the three Jews who were still dressed in their royal robes, trousers, jewelry and turbans; they were dragged to the furnace where they were to be thrown alive into the blazing inferno.

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