



## SAVED TO SERVE

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### DANIEL THE PROPHET - DANIEL 3 THE GOLDEN IMAGE, PART 2

1. In this Sabbath School Lesson, we will continue studying Daniel 3. In our last lesson, we saw that Nebuchadnezzar, in defiance of God, erected the golden image and sanctioned a death decree to all who would not bow down and worship. In this lesson, we will look closely at the experience of the three Hebrew boys as they went through the fiery furnace and apply it to our lives.
2. What did King Nebuchadnezzar threaten to do if they did not worship his golden image? Daniel 3:14, 15

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“The king commanded that the men be brought before him. “Is it true,” he inquired, “do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?” **He endeavored by threats to induce them to unite with the multitude. Pointing to the fiery furnace, he reminded them of the punishment awaiting them if they should persist in their refusal to obey his will. But firmly the Hebrews testified to their allegiance to the God of heaven, and their faith in His power to deliver. The act of bowing to the image was understood by all to be an act of worship. Such homage they could render to God alone.**” {PK 507.1}

3. How did the three Hebrews respond to the king? Daniel 3:16-18

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4. Why did they respond with such firm conviction? Matthew 10:28; Acts 5:29

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“**In vain were the king's threats. He could not turn the men from their allegiance to the Ruler of the universe. From the history of their fathers they had learned that disobedience to God results in dishonor, disaster, and death; and that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, the foundation of all true prosperity.**” Calmly facing the furnace, they said, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so [if this is your decision], our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand, O king.” Their faith strengthened as they declared that God would be glorified by delivering them, and with triumphant assurance born of implicit trust in God, they added, “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.” {PK 507.3}

“**Choose poverty, reproach, separation from friends, or any suffering rather than to defile the soul with sin. Death before dishonor or the transgression of God's law should be the motto of every Christian.**” {5T 147.1}

5. As Bible-believing Christians, what outcomes should we always be ready for as we follow God? Daniel 3:17, 18

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“**There is a picture representing a bullock standing between a plow and an altar, with the inscription, “Ready for either,” ready to toil in the furrow or to be offered on the altar of sacrifice. This is the position of the true child of God—willing to go where duty calls, to deny self, to sacrifice for the Redeemer's cause.**” {MH 502.5}

6. Luke 21:12-19 is similar to the scene in Daniel 3. Read Luke 21:16-18. What apparent “discrepancy” is in these verses?

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7. **Note:** Why do the scriptures say that some of us will be put to death and then say, not a hair of our head shall perish? The answer is simply that some of God's people will be martyred for their faith, while others will be preserved from death by God. All throughout history, the same has been true: some of God's faithful servants were persecuted and killed (See GC 240.3), while others lived and continued to spread the gospel. For example, most of Jesus' twelve disciples were martyred, but John the Revelator lived and continued to testify of God. Let's briefly compare the life of Martin Luther, the protestant reformer, with the three Hebrews.

8. Was Luther given a chance to recant the truth when brought before civil and religious rulers for his faith? How did he respond? See quotations below.
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**“Those who stubbornly closed their eyes to the light, and determined not to be convinced of the truth, were enraged at the power of Luther’s words.** As he ceased speaking, the spokesman of the Diet said angrily: “You have not answered the question put to you.... You are required to give a clear and precise answer.... **Will you, or will you not, retract?”** {GC 160.1}

“The Reformer answered: “Since your most serene majesty and your high mightinesses require from me a clear, simple, and precise answer, **I will give you one, and it is this: I cannot submit my faith either to the pope or to the councils, because it is clear as the day that they have frequently erred and contradicted each other. Unless therefore I am convinced by the testimony of Scripture or by the clearest reasoning, unless I am persuaded by means of the passages I have quoted, and unless they thus render my conscience bound by the word of God, I cannot and I will not retract, for it is unsafe for a Christian to speak against his conscience. Here I stand, I can do no other; may God help me. Amen.**”—Ibid., b. 7, ch. 8. {GC 160.2}

9. **Note:** Let us transition back to the account in Daniel 3 and see how the test of the fiery furnace applies to our lives today.

10. What did Nebuchadnezzar do to the furnace and to the three Hebrews after hearing their choice to obey God? Daniel 3:19, 20

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11. What does the fire represent for us today? 1 Peter 4:12; 1 Peter 1:7 \_\_\_\_\_

12. What does God desire to teach us when we go through temptations and trials?

a) James 1:2-4 \_\_\_\_\_

b) Romans 5:3-4 \_\_\_\_\_

13. Nebuchadnezzar heated the fiery furnace seven times. What does seven represent in scripture? Genesis 2:2, 3; Exodus 20:8-11

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14. As we learned, the number seven represents completion in the Bible. Why must we go through the fiery trials of life? Psalm 12:6 (focus on the last phrase)

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15. Besides fiery trials, what else will God use to purify us? Psalm 12:6 (first phrase) \_\_\_\_\_

16. **Note:** The Word of God purifies us in two primary ways: as we read, study, and apply the principles of the Bible, it will transform our lives and cleanse us from the impurities of sin. Secondly, as we live out the principles of God’s Word, men will hate us and persecute us, which will plunge us into fiery trials because we follow Jesus and His Word (Mark 4:17; Luke 21:17).

17. While we must go through the fire, we can still be encouraged in the midst of it. Who is the One holding us in the fire until we are completely purged? Malachi 3:1-3

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**“Our heavenly Father measures and weighs every trial before He permits it to come upon the believer. He considers the circumstances and the strength of the one who is to stand under the proving and test of God, and He never permits the temptations to be greater than the capacity of resistance.”** {2MCP 473.2}

18. Read Daniel 3:21, 23. How were the three Hebrews thrown into the fire?

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19. After being thrown into the fire, how were they described in Daniel 3:25? (See the first phrase)

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20. **Note:** The three Hebrews were thrown into the fiery furnace bound or tied up. Proverbs 5:22 lets us know that many individuals are “holden with the cords of his sins.” Sometimes when we go through trials, we are bound in our sins and God providentially uses the trials to burn off that which is unlike Him and **loose** us from the bondage of sin (Isaiah 58:6). Notice, that the only thing consumed in the fire was the Babylonian ropes. God permits the fire so that all things worldly and Babylonian will be purged from our lives.

21. What did Nebuchadnezzar ask his servants, and who did he see in the midst of the fire with the three Hebrews? Daniel 3:24, 25; John 17:1; Matthew 3:16-17

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22. What promises did God fulfill for the three Hebrews, which He will fulfill in our lives as well? Isaiah 43:2; Zechariah 13:8-9

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**“By the deliverance of His faithful servants, the Lord declared that He takes His stand with the oppressed, and rebukes all earthly powers that rebel against the authority of Heaven.** The three Hebrews declared to the whole nation of Babylon their faith in Him whom they worshiped. They relied on God. **In the hour of their trial they remembered the promise, “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.”** Isaiah 43:2. And in a marvelous manner their faith in the living Word had been honored in the sight of all. The tidings of their wonderful deliverance were carried to many countries by the representatives of the different nations that had been invited by Nebuchadnezzar to the dedication. Through the faithfulness of His children, God was glorified in all the earth.” {PK 511.1}

23. Read Daniel 3:26-30. What was the end result of the Hebrews' decision to remain faithful to God? Luke 21:13

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24. As we manifest faithfulness and patience under trials, what effect will it have on others? Acts 4:13; John 12:21

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25. As we close, compare Daniel 3:27 with Revelation 20:6. Why must we go through the fires of life now? **Answer: We must go through fiery trials now because if we go through it with patience and faith, we will escape the second death, and it will have NO POWER over us.**

**“As in the days of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, so in the closing period of earth's history the Lord will work mightily in behalf of those who stand steadfastly for the right. He who walked with the Hebrew worthies in the fiery furnace will be with His followers wherever they are. His abiding presence will comfort and sustain.** In the midst of the time of trouble—trouble such as has not been since there was a nation—His chosen ones will stand unmoved. **Satan with all the hosts of evil cannot destroy the weakest of God's saints. Angels that excel in strength will protect them, and in their behalf Jehovah will reveal Himself as a “God of gods,” able to save to the uttermost those who have put their trust in Him.**” {PK 513.1}