



Unshakable Faith

THE BOOK OF DANIEL

Week 3

Theme: Refining (Chapter 3)

Weekly Memory Verse

"If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty's hand."

– Daniel 3:17

Day 1: Worship

Prayer of Illumination

Father, draw us into Your Presence and reveal to us the idols that distract us from the fullness of who You are. May the boldness of our worship bring You glory.

Reading

Read Chapter 3 entirely, then focus on Daniel 3:1-7.

Meditation

What is the Lord revealing to you today through Daniel 3:1-7?

What do these verses say about God's character?

How does this apply to us today?

Contemplation

In many cultures, statues are often worshipped. Babylon wasn't any different. In fact, in ancient Babylon sometimes not just gods, but also kings were worshipped through the use of statues. Nebuchadnezzar's dream inspired this gold image and his initial hope was to use this giant idol as a unifying prop to centralize worship. Nebuchadnezzar doesn't just want to be king. He wants people to worship him as the ruler. Worship and power go together. As followers of Christ, we must be aware of what "powers and rulers" in the world demand our worship. Caesar demands what belongs to Caesar *and* also demands what belongs to God.

It's up to us to process through our own views. All of them. Anything IN and OF this world that would be our primary lens before our Jesus lens. We cannot let worldly things, no matter how important, be MORE important than the worship of our God and King. All things that are not of God are short-lived.

Reflection

What is your "gold statue"? (e.g., spouse, children, politics, social media, etc.)

What boundaries can you set in place to reset your values?

Day 2: Resolve

Prayer of Illumination

Holy Spirit, You are present, You are here, and You are alive. Don't let us look past You but toward You. Teach us today. In Jesus name, Amen.

Reading

Read Chapter 3 entirely, then focus on Daniel 3:8-12.

Meditation

What is the Lord revealing to you today through Daniel 3:8-12?

What do these verses say about the human condition?

How does this apply to us today?

Contemplation

What do we do when we are faced with an adversity that is fueled by fear and backed by the majority? Simply put: What do we do in the face of peer pressure? This is what three Hebrew boys face, and as Christians, this is what many of us face today.

In today's culture, it seems to be the desire of many to be normal. To be just like everyone else. Very few of us want to be the odd person out; most of us want to fit in, to belong. It's high on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and even *defines* many of us personally. We conform to our surroundings; we do our best to blend in.

The three Hebrew boys are facing insurmountable odds, with the face of death. They know the cost of standing up and saying no when everyone else is saying yes. So do you and I. Our struggle is our resolve to stand and accept the oncoming backlash of what is next. We know what is next. Rejection. And for some of us, that rejection burns hotter than a furnace.

So how do we stand? Daniel 3:12 reminds us that they were "...set over the affairs of the province of Babylon." These three boys had authority. You and I have authority in Christ. You are not weak, and neither were they. And that's just in the natural. They knew that the power of God gave them authority, not the king, and they knew that the power of God would sustain them. Be resolved to stand in that authority today!

Reflection

In what ways have we bowed our knee to cultural or social pressure?

What is the name of the fear(s) you may have that drive you to conform?

How can you allow God's power to be made perfect in your weakness by standing today? (2 Corinthians 12:9)

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Day 3: Confidence

Prayer of Illumination

Lord God, let us see You and who You are in the middle of uncertainty. May we have a holy confidence that comes from knowing who You are and who we are in You.

Reading

Read Chapter 3 entirely, then focus on Daniel 3:13-18.

Meditation

What is the Lord revealing to you today through Daniel 3:13-18?

What do these verses say about God's character?

How does this apply to us today?

Contemplation

"Even if." We aren't guaranteed to know the results of anything that we do. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego all saw the work of the Lord in their training (Chapter 1) and in the revelation of the king's dream (Chapter 2). They know God's power and sovereignty in this current situation. They first acknowledge God's character and sovereignty. They don't need to defend themselves because they have holy confidence in the Lord. They know that the Lord has the ability to deliver them from the furnace and the king's hand. *But even if God doesn't*, they still resolved themselves not to worship any idols. Even if their lives are not saved in that moment, like many martyrs in Scripture and today, they have chosen to remain faithful to God.

How did they have such confidence and boldness? Were they prepared for this moment? We see in Chapter 1 their unwillingness to waiver when put to the test on whether or not to eat the food given to them. Each step of obedience leads to greater faith and trust in God for the next moment we meet a crossroad: do we choose to remain faithful or do we bend?

Reflection

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts." (Psalm 139:23). Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you any area in your life where you are anxious from uncertainty. What aspect of God's character do you need to take hold of for this area?

When was a time that you were faithful to God at a crossroad in the past? How have you seen God's faithfulness? How does that influence your faithfulness in the present?

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Day 4: Redeem

Prayer of Illumination

Lord God, grant us the spiritual eyes to see our circumstances as You see them. Help us to meditate on Your faithfulness, Your power, and Your goodness. May we not be so distracted by the physical that we miss the supernatural.

Reading

Read Chapter 3 entirely, then focus on Daniel 3:19-30.

Meditation

What is the Lord revealing to you today through Daniel 3:19-30?

What do these verses say about God's character?

How does this apply to us today?

Contemplation

People say, "If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen." In today's passage, the soldiers could not stand the literal heat of their king's wrath, so they perished carrying out the death sentence on innocent men. And yet, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego not only entered the furnace alive, they were retrieved from the fire without harm. A powerful miracle.

How did they escape a perilous fate? They knew it was better to die for their belief in God than to live and deny the God that gave them life. Because of their radical faith unto death, God met them in the furnace, walked among the fire, and supernaturally shielded them from harm.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego displayed a holy defiance. They stood innocent and faithful in the midst of unjust oppression. And their God, the Redeemer, rescued His people. Similarly, we may all have something in our lives where we are faithfully waiting for the fulfillment of promises from Scripture, that God will redeem His people and bring restoration. If you are waiting for deliverance, continue to wait in holy expectation that God, the Redeemer, will bring glory to His name.

Reflection

In what ways is God calling you to holy defiance?

Is there a time in your life where God has rescued you? Where are you still waiting on God to redeem your cause?

Take a moment and reflect on the moments in your life where God has intervened on your behalf. Praise God for the steps along the way and praise Him for the intervention yet to come.

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Day 5: Pause & Reflect

Ask the Lord, journal, and pray through the following questions ...

God, what are some of the takeaways from Chapter 3 that you want to highlight in my life?

Spend time today posturing yourself to listen and reflect on each day's theme:

- Worship
- Resolve
- Confidence
- Redeem

What is one thing you are going to do in response to this week's message and reading plan, and who is going to hold you accountable?

Write down one takeaway and one action step in a journal to commit to it.

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