



March 15 – 21, 2021

Title: When Daniel's Not Around

Scriptures: Daniel 3:15-30

Speaker: Elder Steve Pinkston

Introduction - King Nebuchadnezzar had an image of gold made and summoned his leaders to a dedication ceremony where everyone was told to bow down and worship the image or be thrown into a fiery furnace. As administrators over Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were in attendance, but refused to bow before the image. Nebuchadnezzar had them tied up and thrown into the fiery furnace, but then is surprised by what he sees; four men were walking around in the fire, and he says the fourth, "looks like the son of God."

Read Daniel 3:15-30

1. Everyone Has an Individual Test—Daniel 3:16-18, James 1:2-4
 - a. Although Daniel is the leader and most accomplished of these young men and responsible for their advancement in the kingdom of Babylon, Daniel is not present when they go through their greatest challenge. This was their test, trial, ordeal to face.
 - b. Spiritual maturity means understanding that there is an individual race that each of us must run, which will contain individual trials that are uniquely our own to face.
 - c. The Hebrew boys didn't shrink from the challenge, but decided that if the furnace was part of their journey, then they would face that part of the journey. This is the attitude God would have us adopt.
 - d. James 1:2-4—Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.
2. The Most Important Person will be Present—Daniel 3:24-25; Isaiah 43:2-3; Psalm 46:1-2
 - a. As the Hebrew boys were tied up and thrown into the furnace Daniel was not there and could not have helped them. However, the one who shows up in the furnace is the one they really needed; the only one who could protect them, enable them to walk around in the fire and come out unaffected.
 - b. When you face challenges that are uniquely yours to face, the good news is that you don't have to go it alone. When the Daniels of your life are not around, the most important person is still present.
 - c. The most important presence is God. God will be present. He will never leave you alone.
 - i. Isaiah 43:2-3—When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the



fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. For I am the LORD, your God, the Holy One of Israel; your Savior....

- ii. Psalm 46:1-2—God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, even though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.
 - d. Someone knows that in the supreme crisis of your life when no one else was around, the most important person was with you. It was God who dried your tears, strengthened you, comforted you, healed you. God walked with you, held you together, protected you, helped you persevere.
3. You Have to go Through to Provide Evidence for Others—Daniel 3:28-30; 2 Corinthians 4:8-9
- a. Nebuchadnezzar calls the Hebrew boys to come out of the furnace. They emerge without a hint of the fire; no burns, not even the smell of smoke. Nebuchadnezzar praises their God and declares, “there is no other God who can deliver like this!” He then promotes them to higher positions within the Babylonian government. Their fiery trial was a testimony Daniel needed to hear for the challenge he would later face.
 - b. Years later, King Darius makes a decree that for 30 days people were to pray only to Darius. If caught praying to anyone else they would be thrown into the lion’s Den. When Daniel learned of the decree, what did Daniel choose to do? He went home, opened his window toward Jerusalem, and prayed three times that day to God, as he was accustomed to doing. Daniel could face his trial in chapter 6, because of the evidence he had from the trial God brought Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego through.
 - c. God allows you to face what you face in your chapter 3, so that you can be a witness and provide evidence for someone else’s chapter 6.
 - i. 2 Corinthians 4:8-9—*We are* hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; *we are* perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed.
 - d. Through facing your trials, you provide the evidence that:
 - i. ...weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning (Psalm 30:5).
 - ii. But those who wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength...(Isaiah 40:31).
 - iii. And my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19)
 - iv. No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. (Romans 8:37)
 - v. You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. (1 John 4:4)