

## **Daniel 3:19-30 – The Power of God Displayed Again in 3 Ways!**

JFB, Henry, Poole, TSK, Trapp, HebrewLexicon, Geneva, Gill, GreekLexicon, Calvin, Clarke?

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Our headings are: God's power displayed in the **Fearlessness of the Covenant Children**, God's power displayed in the **Friend of the Covenant Children**, and God's power displayed in the **Fiend of the Covenant Children**.

Our goals are: **That seeing the power of God to preserve his own that you will confidently stand up for truth and righteousness in your life, family, church and country.**

### **God's Power was Displayed in the Fearlessness of the Covenant Children**

19 Then Nebuchadnezzar was full of fury, and the expression on his face changed toward Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. He spoke and commanded that they heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated.

1. Because of his great fury, Nebuchadnezzar punished the Covenant children of God worse than was normal. He had the furnace heated 7 times more than it usually was – probably by adding different types of wood, or using additional types of heating material.

Proverbs 25:28 Whoever *has* no rule over his own spirit *is like* a city broken down, without walls.

But the men of God did not change their minds when they felt the heat of the furnace. Death did not scare them. Breaking God's law scared them.

20 And he commanded certain mighty men of valor who were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, and cast them into the burning fiery furnace.

21 Then these men were bound in their coats, their trousers, their turbans, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

2. Nebuchadnezzar had the men tied up...in their clothes...and thrown into the fire. To be burned in your own clothes was a particular contempt. It was as if the king were saying: "Because you are so contemptible, I don't even want your clothes to survive." Relatives would not even get the men's clothes as a memory! But these men were courageous. They were fearless. And this is the kind of choices that Muslims and Hindus force Christians to make every day – renounce Christ or die. Fearlessly, Christians usually choose death rather than renounce Christ.

Mt 5:11 "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.

Remember if you are ashamed of Christ before men he will be ashamed of you before his Father. What made these men fearless? What makes you fearless before fire? It is because you trust in Christ and you are his child– and you are not afraid of what man can do to you. Your God is real and in control of your life. He gives life. He takes life. And you know that if you die you pass straight on to heaven.

3. Question! If God has all power, why didn't God kill Nebuchadnezzar...maybe cause him to go near the fire...and burn him to death and let the 3 men go free? He did not do this because it did not serve his purposes. God wanted to extract a confession from Nebuchadnezzar that would be good for his people and for his kingdom. So learn to wait on God's purposes and on God's timing. Do not be angry when the wicked prosper. (Illustrate using death.)

22 Therefore, because the king's command was urgent, and the furnace exceedingly hot, the flame of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. 23 And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

4. The fire was so intense that it killed the men who took the 3 men to the furnace. Maybe God, showing his power, blew the fire toward those who were helping in this murder. The executioners should have resisted participating in this evil. The death of these executioners further added to Nebuchadnezzar guilt of murder. And this is what happens when one has unbridled fury. He never learned to control his anger. His ego, because it was hurt, caused him to overreact. And notice additionally that the 3 Hebrews were tied up... which made God's power of saving them more remarkable.

5. What testimony this would have been to the people of God everywhere! They would see God's power. They would see strong faith. Their faith would have come alive.

### **God's Power Displayed in the Friend of the Covenant Children**

24 Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and he rose in haste and spoke, saying to his counselors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?" They answered and said to the king, "True, O king." 25 "Look!" he answered, "I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

1. The king soon realized that there were 4 men in the fire – walking around – maybe singing the Psalms.

What a beautiful picture of the spiritual unity that Christians have. Doesn't that remind you of Paul and Silas in prison...singing after midnight. So Nebuchadnezzar questioned to make sure they had not put in an extra man. Since the 4 men were free in the fire, why weren't they scrambling to get out of the furnace? They knew that any place was paradise as long as God was present. (Trapp) Noah's coffin-like Ark did not make him panic. Daniel in the lion's den did not fear. God was present. The men knew that God could save them from wind, water, or fire.

Philippians 4:7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Gill: All the afflictions of the saints are in love, and are designed for good, and do work together for good to them that love God; they are sometimes for their temporal, and often for their spiritual good, and always work for them an exceeding weight of glory.

2. Some disagree, but I believe this 4<sup>th</sup> man in the fire walking around with the 3 Hebrews was the Son of God, Jesus Christ, in his pre-incarnate form. Jesus is often called *the Angel of God* which is interchanged with the name Jehovah. Only the Son of God takes on human form. Ge 12:7 18:10,13,17,20 Ex 23:23 33:2 Jos 5:13-15; Ge 19:24 Ex 3:2 Ac 7:30,32,33,38. (Further, Daniel spoke of seeing the Son of God later.) God does promise to give his angels to protect you...

Psalms 34:7 The angel of the LORD encamps all around those who fear Him, And delivers them.

Nebuchadnezzar made some amazing confessions... why could he not know the Son of God? Furthermore why would he have just said: "Their God is helping them?" Instead, he made it clear that it was the Son of El in the fire.

3. What a presage of what Jesus does – he rescues those who are sentenced to the fires of hell and.

26 Then Nebuchadnezzar went near the mouth of the burning fiery furnace and spoke, saying, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, servants of the Most High God, come out, and come here." Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego came from the midst of the fire.

4. Aware of his sin of idolatry, false judgment, and murder, Nebuchadnezzar called the men out of the furnace, and again, like when he received his dream and the interpretation, acknowledged that the God of the Hebrews was the greatest of all gods. God's power made him confess this! This was against everything he believed.

27 And the satraps, administrators, governors, and the king's counselors gathered together, and they saw these men on whose bodies the fire had no power; the hair of their head was not singed nor were their garments affected, and the smell of fire was not on them.

5. When the leaders of the kingdom examined the 3 men they found that not even the hair on their heads was singed...and not even the smell of the fire was on their bodies. Could these 3 men have reached so many people to speak of the power of God as all these leaders from all the provinces of Babylon would do because of the power of God they had seen? Further, the Friend of the Hebrews showed his omnipotence and worked above nature. Isaiah prophesied that God's people would walk through fire and be preserved.

Isaiah 43:2 When you pass through the waters, I *will be* with you; And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, Nor shall the flame scorch you.

Wasn't this the same God who said he could put the fires where he wanted...so his people can pass through in safety?

Ps 29:7 The voice of the LORD divides the flames of fire.

Wasn't this what God promised to those who were going to experience persecution?

Luke 21:18 "But not a hair of your head shall be lost.

Wasn't this the same God who brought fire on Elijah's sacrifice on Mt. Carmel but refused to burn up the sacrifice of the prophets of Baal...Nebuchadnezzar's god?

1Kings 18:36"LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You *are* God in Israel and I *am* Your servant, and *that* I have done all these things at Your word. 37 "Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that You are the LORD God, and that You have turned their hearts back to You again." 38 Then the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust, and it licked up the water...

### **God's Power displayed in the Fiend of the Covenant Children**

28 Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, who sent His Angel and **delivered His servants who trusted in Him**, and they have frustrated the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they

should not serve nor worship any god except their own God!

1. So what did the fiend of God's covenant children do? He praised the true God and acknowledged that the true God delivered the Hebrew men out of the furnace. This true God was the Lord of kings...who **could stop any king's word from being fulfilled**? What a change from earlier.

Jethro, the convert, righteously proclaimed:

Exodus 18:11 "Now I know that the LORD *is* greater than all the gods; for in the very thing in which they behaved proudly, He was above them."

Psalm 89:6 For who in the heavens can be compared to the LORD? Who among the sons of the mighty can be likened to the LORD?

But it was not a true confession in Nebuchadnezzar's heart. He was making an emotional confession – not a true one. He did not confess that Elohim was ***his God***. You see, miracles don't make change in the heart and this most remarkable miracle did not change his. Miracles only have an impact after God changes the heart to strengthen the faith of Christians.

2. This story was much larger than the 3 Hebrew young men. Imagine the impact of the Fiend's statement:

1. The Jews would be able to boast in their Lord...not in some abstract way, but in a real literal way.

2. Nebuchadnezzar was again shown to be a weak man and give hope to the Jews.

3. These leaders from all over the kingdom would take back this message to their people. What doors would then have been opened up for the Gospel!

4. What better treatment the people of God would have received in all parts of the kingdom! You see, Nebuchadnezzar meant it for evil, but God meant it for good...as Joseph said to his brothers who sold him as a slave to Egypt.

29 "Therefore I make a decree that any people, nation, or language which speaks anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made an ash heap; because there is no other God who can deliver like this."

3. Then the king made another decree: That none could speak anything against Jehovah God. If they did, he threatened to cut them in pieces and make their houses (maybe everyone in their house) as a garbage dump. Of course this was not a good thing. He was overdoing things again. God did not call Nebuchadnezzar to cut people in pieces for his honor. And what is interesting is that he did not resolve to worship the true God. Bel (Baal) could not protect the men who took the 3 Hebrews to the fire, but yet Nebuchadnezzar continued to worship him. He was convinced of Jehovah's salvation but not converted. But what power! Even the wicked confess it! What a fiend! What a monster.

30 Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego in the province of Babylon.

4. By his sovereign power, God caused Nebuchadnezzar to promote these men further. They were sentenced to death when the witchdoctors could not reveal the king's dream and its meaning, but God saved them. They were thrown into the fire as a death sentence, but God protected them. And then they were promoted through the work of God. God is an awesome God, awesome in power.

### **Conclusion:**

The fire raged but it could not ruin the children of God. Why not? Because the Friend of the Christian determined that it would not. The fiend brought much trouble upon himself by seeing the power of God but denying the power of God in his life. God, by his power, caused the Fiend to bring blessing to his children.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: The Hebrew young men were able to face the fires because of their **strong faith in Jesus Christ.** Are you nourished enough by God's Word and Spirit to face the fires in your life? If you are, then no marriage problem is too big. No job problem is insurmountable. No health issues can overwhelm you. No temptation is unbeatable. No loneliness can overpower you. Yes, you might lose your job, your wife, your health...but even then...they can't overwhelm you. Why? John 8: 36 "Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed. Spiritual freedom removes fear. And not only do you get freedom, you also get God's comfort always. Remember Psalm 138:7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble, You will revive me; You will stretch out Your hand Against the wrath of my enemies, And Your right hand will save me. And remember Psalm 23:4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You *are* with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. And when you do stand up against the trials of life, your life will be a testimony of the power of God to transform the life of a sinner and make him strong. This will bring glory to him.

Finally: A man once said: "If I wanted a religion to satisfy my flesh, I would choose anything but Christianity." He was right. This flesh will soon be consumed. So don't live for it. Make sure you put emphasis on your own soul. Remember Hebrews 12:29 For our God is a consuming fire...and fire that consumes souls. But if you confess Christ before men – that he lived and died for you, he will confess you before his Father in heaven.