

WALKING THROUGH THE FIRE

Isaiah 43:2 has been an encouragement to many people: "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they will not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, nor will the flame burn you." When was God's promise, "I will be with you" important to you?

LEARN FROM GOD'S WORD

Notes for Daniel 3. A few tips when studying Daniel 3. First, this slice of history happens many years after chapter two. Chapter two concluded with king Nebuchadnezzar honoring the God of Daniel. Second, it includes three of the four men from chapter one, perhaps Daniel was not present because he was serving in the court (see 2:49). Third, while the story is full of intrigue, be sure to also read this for what God is teaching us today.

Read through chapter three, and consider the following questions:
What are your first impressions? Feelings?

Most of the story is about the king. What actions of the king are repeated in this story? (1, 2, 3, 5, 12, 18) Why would Daniel repeat it six times?

What were the king's reactions when the Chaldeans (native Babylonian astrologers) accused the "certain Jews whom you have appointed" (v.12) and then heard the Jew's response? Why such a reaction?

Have you experienced such reactions from yourself or others? What is it that causes us to experience rage or intense anger?

Daniel gave a detailed record of the wrath of the king (19-22) against the Jews. What do you notice?

What were the king's responses when he saw the "four" people unscathed?

DISCUSS TOGETHER

This story was first an influence on the Jews in exile and those returning to the land. What would this mean to them? What might this mean to us, God's family?

Are there things in our culture similar to the Babylonians? How are we in a similar status to the exiles?

How are these three men a model for us today by how they responded to the king? What might we learn and apply?

APPLY IT THIS WEEK

Fear of the opinions and responses of people is a constant pressure in our culture. What do you understand from this story about God and His plans? Do you have unhealthy fear of people's opinions and reactions? How can God and His family help you overcome fear of reprisal or rejection or failing?

PLEASE PRAY

- For Arin, a young man in our church family who was gravely injured in an accident
- For those who attended the women's "Courageous" conference to stay encouraged to grow
- For victims of the fires, for wisdom in how to help
- For the upcoming Man Skills gathering (February 1) to encourage men to follow Jesus