



From cover to cover, the Bible is clear, fire will come your way. Let's look at just a couple of incidents of this:

1 Peter 1:7, These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold. (NLT)

James 1:2-3, Consider it a sheer gift, friends, when tests and challenges come at you from all sides. You know that under pressure, your faith-life is forced into the open and shows its true colors. (Msg)

Isaiah 43:2, 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. (NIV)

Today we will look at a test for fire. Six centuries before the birth of Christ, Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, had a huge ego, and required the people to worship him, by bowing down to an image of himself he had set up. The punishment was death by fire. Three young men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego took a stand and risk their lives by refusing to bow. From this story, we can pick up on four key ideas.

DEVELOP A DISPOSITION OF CONFIDENCE

Daniel 3:16-17, *Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to give you an answer to this question. If we are thrown into the fire, our God whom we serve is able to save us from it. And He will save us from your hand, O king. (NLV)*

The three Hebrew young men had a plan before the flames were lit.

They knew God was with them and for them.

They had prepared their minds ahead of time.

1 Peter 1:13, *Prepare your minds for action. (NIV)*

DON'T ALLOW YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES TO CAUSE YOU TO COMPROMISE.

Daniel 3:19-23, *Nebuchadnezzar's face twisted with anger at the three men. He ordered the furnace to be heated seven times hotter than usual. Next, he commanded some of his strongest soldiers to tie up the men and throw them into the flaming furnace...So the soldiers tied up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and threw them into the flaming furnace with all of their clothes still on, including their turbans. The fire was so hot that flames leaped out and killed the soldiers. (CEV)*

God did not promise you that you would avoid the fire.

Isaiah 40:2, *When you walk through the fire...*

GRASP GOD'S HAND AS YOU ARE WALKING THROUGH THE FIRE.

Daniel 3:24-27, *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." "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." Then Nebuchadnezzar went near the mouth of the burning fiery furnace and spoke, saying, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out, and come here." Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego of the fire...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. (NKJV)

God never said we wouldn't go into the furnace, but he did say that he would jump in with us.

REALIZE THAT GOD HAS A PROMOTION FOR YOU.

Daniel 3:30, After this happened, the king appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to even higher positions in Babylon Province. (CEV)

This whole test was a set up. They were being set up by God.

1 Peter 3:9, Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing. (NIV)

The only thing they lost in the fire were the ropes!