



Sunday, January 10, 2021

Pastor Don Denyes

Intro to Daniel 3

As Pastor Don said Sunday morning, we as Christians living in America have a lot to learn from the Israelites who were taken into exile in Babylon. While our circumstances are not exactly like theirs by any means, we have gotten comfortable in “Christendom”—a society that has been largely favorable to at least cultural Christianity for a long time.

Now, at least culturally and politically-speaking, we find ourselves in a significant minority. While we don’t face constant persecution like many of our brothers and sisters have faced down the centuries and even around the world in our day, we are increasingly going to find that the world does not accept our beliefs. So, where do we turn when many of us have not experienced this before?

Thank God for the sufficiency of His word! We know that God’s word is sufficient for all things that pertain to life and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3). We know that our trials are momentary. We know that our trials are refining us and making us more into Christ’s image. We know that our trials are going to bring glory to God. And we know that our trials are ultimately for our good. May these truths (and so many more) embolden us to endure whatever may come.

Context

What’s interesting about the context of Daniel 3 is that it comes after Daniel 2! That chapter saw Daniel interpret the dreams of King Nebuchadnezzar and ended with Nebuchadnezzar’s proclamation that Daniel’s God is God of gods and Lord of lords (2:47). Not only that, but this supposedly new-found faith had implications for David and his friends. However, by the time we arrive at chapter 3, it is as if Nebuchadnezzar had forgotten the whole thing. Sometimes God must teach us lessons repeatedly in order to get our attention.

Read and Reflect *(Use this section to write down any thoughts you had on the sermon. Make sure to note any questions you had about something in the passage or in the sermon.)*

Read Daniel 3

“Fruit from the Fire”

Four Benefits from Trials

- This trial will reveal His presence

- This trial will display His power

- This trial will multiply His praise

- This trial will result in our progress

Discuss

- 1) What is the greatest trial you have endured in your life?

- 2) How compelling are those four benefits to you when you are suffering? How clearly are you able to see them?

- 3) Why do you think so many Christians believe that God will protect them from every trial? Have you ever found yourself believing that?

- 4) Pastor Don talked about the Israelites ability to be defiant in their faith and yet defer confidently to God's sovereign power. How easy is it for you to balance those things?

- 5) Read Romans 5:3-5. How does this passage encourage us when we suffer? How can we use this passage to encourage others in our lives as they suffer?