

BIBLE STUDY LIVE

Faith In The Fire

The Resources of Our Faith

Read: Dan 3: 16 – 18

In reviewing this scripture several assertions of the attributes of God are put forth by these three Hebrew youngsters. Let's take a moment to examine just a few:

GOD IS ABLE

Read: Dan 3:17

17 If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. KJV

These three young Hebrew teenagers make a very important declaration that secures our expectations of God. That statement is simple yet profound: "Our God is able!" Faith that second guesses God's "able-ness" is nothing more than a desperate desire or a weak wish. This is faith in the power or ability of God to accomplish his will. **READ:** Jude 1:24

24 Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, KJV

Grammatically speaking the pronoun "he" is expressed in this verse in the absence of its antecedent. In other words, we are left to determine who is the "he" that Jude is speaking of. **QUESTION:** When you read Jude 1:24, what are some of the abilities of the "he" that Jude is speaking of? According to the text, this "he" is able to "keep you from falling." I know of people who may be willing to help me after I fall, or to make it let possible for me to fall, but I don't know of anyone who is able to forever keep me from falling. In addition, this "he" according to Jude is also able to present me "faultless." Given all of our shortcomings, flaws and sins, can you think of anyone that is able to wash all your sins away and clothe you in his righteousness alone?

IS GOD IS WILLING?

It may indeed be one thing to believe that God is "able" but at the same time have doubt that God is in fact "willing" to intervene on our behalf. **READ Matt 8:2 and 1 John 5:14 – 15** The leper in Matthew 8:2 shares the "God is Able" doctrine with the Hebrew boys. The diseased soul places the matter squarely in Jesus hands attesting to Jesus' abilities yet seemingly questioning his willingness. We must understand that this was not a test of Jesus' kindness or a test of God's level of mercy towards this poor soul. The question really is whether God sees it in that person's eternal best interests to do what that person is requesting of him.

READ: 2 Peter 3:9: The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. KJV.

QUESTIONS: To 2 Peter 3:9, what is God's eternal will for us? If answering someone's request would somehow put him on a path of sin and cause him to perish in their sins, would it be in that person's "best interests?" How might we be able to better determine the will of God?

READ Mark 9:24 – QUESTION: Is it possible for faith and doubt to co-exist in a person? Does the presence of doubt a determinate of your spirituality or sincerity?

GOD IS SOVEREIGN: When we read this passage in Daniel, we come to understand the mature kind of faith bound up in the one statement “but if not” – that truly made these young boys “fire-proof!”

QUESTIONS: Why was this such a profound statement for these young men to make? In this way these boys acknowledge that God exercising his power and saving them from the king’s fiery furnace may NOT be within God’s purpose for their lives; in this mindset these boys were acknowledging God’s sovereign right to rule and govern their lives. How might the Covid19 Crisis create doubt and fear in God’s people?

OBSTACLES OF FAITH

DOUBT: Doubt is unlike unbelief. Unbelief says “I looked into the matter and I don’t accept such a claim and walks away. Doubt on the other hand, looks at the matter and simply says “I don’t know if I can trust it” and leaves a person in a holding pattern of uncertainty. In other words unbelief dismisses the claim entirely while doubt leaves a void of uncertainty. Satan is a grand master at creating doubt: **READ: Genesis 3:1 – QUESTION:** What was Satan trying to accomplished in the mind of Eve concerning what God has spoken to her regarding the trees of the garden?

COMPROMISE: Notice that King Nebuchhadnezzar did not demand that these Hebrew boys would deny their faith in God, but simply bow to the idol god like everyone else. Satan was merely asking these Hebrew boys to share a little spot of their worship with this idol god and their God could have the larger portion of their devotion. **READ Acts 5: 1 – 2 QUESTION:** Does the scripture tell us that this couple held back the bigger part of the sale from God? Satan doesn’t require that we give him the larger percentage of anything we have – he is comfortable maximizing our minimal sin investment! On the other hand, God requires our all!

FAITH: Faith always involves risks. If there are no risks then there is really no need for faith. Likewise, where there is no fear, there is no real need for God to provide us with courage. If we can clearly see the path of life ahead then we are most likely walking by sight and not by faith. **QUESTION:** How can you tell if you have faith in God, or faith in your God-given abilities?

Will God Deliver Us?

QUESTION: Is God delivering us from every trial or problem necessarily in our best interests? Why or why not? We must note that the Hebrew boys were not delivered from the fiery furnace they were delivered though it! God used this to introduce his “able-ness” to those that were ignorant of his abilities. Likewise, God will use our adversities to display his “able” grace, mercy, power and even judgement before those who are not acquainted with his divine attributes and power.

Is it possible for us to learn more about ourselves and about God while in the furnace than we could have ever learned outside of it? I have personally come to believe that only a few of us our delivered from the furnace of trials, but most of us are delivered while in it! Remember, when the doors of the furnace was opened the king say four men inside! But only three came out... the one man stayed in the furnace – perhaps waiting on our arrival.