

Feb 11, 2024



# Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

**The Oaks Baptist Church**  
Grand Prairie, Texas

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**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:**

If we have never faced persecution for our faith, let's pray for the persecuted church around the world

**PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:**

Lord God, we believe You weep at the pain and anguish some of Your children experience because they love You. We pray that You will strengthen them in the midst of their suffering and send them Your grace

**SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:**

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven

(Matt 5:10 NKJV)

(from "Our Daily Bread", Nov 20, 2016)

**Series: Faith that Pleases God**

**UNIT 3: The Righteous Live by Faith**

**NEXT WEEK**

**Faith in Times of Trouble**  
(Dan 6:10-11, 14, 16, 19-23, 26-27)

## Faith in the Fiery Furnace Daniel 3:19-28

### Lesson Background and Introduction

By telling the stories of the prophet Daniel and his associates, the book of Daniel depicts Jewish life in a foreign land. A series of deportations from Judah by the Babylonians began in 605 BC (see Daniel 1:1-2). These continued until Judah fell in 586 BC (see 2 Kings 25). Among the deported were talented young men selected for their fitness for service to the Babylonian king (see Daniel 1:3-4). Daniel and his associates were taken to Babylon during this time, in approximately 605 BC. The book describes the wisdom of Daniel and his friends as they lived and served in Babylon (example: 2:17-24). Their positions required that they demonstrate some loyalty to the Babylonian king, evident in their name change (see 1:6-7). This book's events occur from the time of their arrival in Babylon until at least 537 BC, "the third year of Cyrus king of Persia" (10:1). Part of the book of Daniel is preserved in Hebrew (Daniel 1:1-2:4a; 8:1-12:13), while another part is preserved in Aramaic (2:4b-7:28). The use of two languages indicated the different cultures depicted in the book: Hebrew for the Jews and Aramaic for the Gentile empires (2 Kings 18:26; Ezra 4:7). Today's Scripture comes from the part of Daniel preserved in Aramaic. Today's lesson Scripture is the second part of the narrative that begins at Daniel 3:1.

Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon (reigned 605-562 BC), had erected a large image of gold at "the plain of Dura" (Daniel 3:1). This location is suggested to have been several miles south of the city of Babylon. Royal subjects, advisors, and kingdom officials arrived for the image's dedication ceremony and to worship it (3:2-5). Refusing to worship the image would result in inevitable death in a "blazing furnace" (3:6). But Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego—men the king had placed in a leadership position (see 2:49), refused. They had confidence that the Lord would be with them (3:17-18).

Two options face believers when we experience the testing of our faith. One possibility is that we succumb to the testing and quite possibly commit apostasy. The other option is to maintain faithfulness to God, despite the testing. Even when faced with death, the men in today's Scripture chose the latter option. They refused to bend their faith and go along with the king's demands for worship. Their faith in God, rooted in his long history of faithfulness, provided the courage they needed to withstand the testing and resist committing evil. Although we may never experience the same testing these men faced, all believers will likely experience some amount of testing of our faith. However, we can be encouraged. Our victory has already been established (see 1 John 5:4). Even though our enemy seeks to devour, we can stand firm in our faith. God is faithful to his people, even when they are tested. When we face these experiences, we can have trust and respond with faithfulness to him (1 Corinthians 10:13).

*(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)*

## NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

### Faith Confronting Death (Dan 3:19-23)

#### *Death commanded by anger (19-21)*

Anger because of wanting the same things as others (1 Sam 8:10-19)

Anger because of being envious of others (Matt 20:8-15)

Anger over other's blessings (Luke 15:25-32)

Anger because of not understanding spiritual things (1 Cor 2:12-14)

Anger because of being prideful (Prov 13:10)

Anger because of wanting to be the greatest (Mark 9:33-35)

Anger that lets the devil get a foothold (Eph 4:26-27)

Anger that does not bring about the righteous life (James 1:20)

Anger because of hating others (1 John 3:13-15)

#### *Death brings collateral damage (22-23)*

Damage to the whole family (Josh 7:20-26)

Damage because of foolish behavior (Job 5:3-4)

Damage because of wickedness (Prov 14:11)

Damage because of sin (Rom 5:12)

### Faith Demonstrated to Others (Dan 3:24-28)

#### *Demonstrated by sight (24-25)*

Seeing God's power to overcome death (John 11:43-45)

Seeing by Jesus unveiling spiritual eyes (2 Cor 3:13-18)

Seeing good deeds (1 Peter 2:12)

Seeing what God says come true (Numbers 11:23)

Seeing that God saves His anointed (Psalms 20:6)

#### *Demonstrated by action (26)*

Action of relying on God regardless of the circumstances (2 Cor 1:8-9)

Action of keeping the faith to the finish (2 Tim 4:7)

Action of faith and actions working together to make faith complete (James 2:22)

Action of throwing off everything that hinders (Heb 12:1)

Action of confirming and proving God's trust (1 Cor 4:2)

#### *Demonstrated by results (27)*

Results because God answers the call of prayer (Isa 58:9-10)

Results because of obedience (1 Sam 15:22)

Results because of abiding in Jesus (John 15:7)

Results because God gives the victory (1 Cor 15:57)

#### *Demonstration results in acknowledgment (28)*

Acknowledgement of God will happen because God has sworn it (Isa 45:22-24)

Acknowledgement of God at the time of accountability (Rom 14:11-12)

Acknowledgement of God after being humbled by God (Dan 4:31-34)

Acknowledgement of God through revelation (Matt 16:15-17)

Acknowledgement of God through the Holy Spirit (1 John 4:2-3)