

Week 2 – Unshakable: Tested by fire

1 Peter 1:6–7 (NIV)

"In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed."

Faith that has never been tested has never been proven. Today: **Daniel 2 & 3**

Testing our faith isn't always just about what God is developing in us. Sometimes it's about what God wants to reveal about Himself through us.

In both chapters, faithful men face circumstances they cannot control. Neither Daniel nor his friends know how the story will end. *Keep that in mind. We read the end of the story they had not.*

Faith will be tested

The Bible doesn't present faith as something that exempts us from difficulty. Rather, faith is something that will be tested.

Consider Daniel and his friends:

- **Daniel 2:** They face execution because of a problem they didn't create and a demand they couldn't humanly fulfill.
- **Daniel 3:** They face execution because they refuse to compromise their worship of God.

"We sometimes think that if we're faithful enough, we can avoid the fire. But these men were facing the fire precisely because they were faithful."

1. The test reveals what we believe about God

Daniel 2: When you don't know what to do (Daniel's test)

Read Daniel 2:10–19. (set it up about the dream)

Vs. 11- "what the king asks is too difficult..."

The impossibility is what created the opportunity.

Why do we always pray for tests to be easy? Does God only have a little power, little resources, barely help? Our view of God is linked to our prayer confidence.

Notice Daniel's response to an incredibly unjust situation. (Not blowing up in anger or why me)

But look at the progression:

1. He responds with wisdom and tact (v. 14).
2. He asks for time rather than reacting impulsively (v. 16).
3. He gathers his friends to pray (vv. 17–18).

The passage doesn't tell us whether Daniel felt afraid or angry. It tells us what he did in the crisis. (We may feel all kinds of emotions, but our response is what matters)

"Unshakable faith isn't the absence of fear. It's knowing where to turn when fear comes."

Daniel didn't turn inward first. He turned upward and leaned on his community of faith. (Who you surround yourself with matters)

God reveals the answer, and the king declares in vs. 47, "Surely, your God is the God of gods and the Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, for you were able to reveal this mystery."

2. When you don't know what God will do

Chapter 3 (Picture)

Vs. 1-3: Explain the image of gold 90 feet high; all the important people gather; imagine the peer pressure. Buildings, idols, music, power on display.

This is a great reminder that the crowd was not correct. It rarely is. The crowd crucified Jesus.

Daniel 3:12–18. (Daniel's friends tested) **You hear both a declaration of faith in their rescue and submission to a greater will or plan of God that they may not be aware of.**

Vs. 16- we do not need to defend ourselves before you (wow, could I say that?)- this was their moment of victory. The king had no power over their faith.

It's impossible to be a light in a dark world if I'm addicted to its approval.

Their response to the pressure: **vs. 17**

"The God we serve is able to deliver us ... But even if he does not ... we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up."

They believed in God's ability without demanding a particular outcome.

"Even if He doesn't." -Is your faith anchored to an outcome or to God?

Vs. 19-24 (thrown into the fire)

-Remember: why were they in this fire? Is it because they did something wrong? Because God didn't love them? Because God failed? Because they were being punished or taught a lesson? In this moment, they were the teachers; they were always loved by God; they were right in the middle of God's work on the earth...

We forget that, like Jesus, **they could have escaped** death but willfully surrendered to it, as a testimony of God to these pagan people, not regarding themselves and their safety as the priority.

3. Your test may become someone else's testimony

You have two extraordinary stories, chapters 2 & 3; what if the central character connecting both isn't Daniel or his friends? **What if it's Nebuchadnezzar?**

Vs. 24-29

Nebuchadnezzar didn't go looking for God. He encountered God through people whose faith was being tested.

Consider what happens to him through these encounters.

THE KING'S TWO ENCOUNTERS WITH GOD

Daniel 2-God reveals His wisdom when Babylon's wisdom had failed him.

Nebuchadnezzar responds: **"Surely your God is the God of gods and the Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries." (2:47, NIV)**

Daniel 3- God reveals His power and that God's edicts override those of any earthly king.

Nebuchadnezzar responds: **"Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego." (3:28, NIV)**

We usually read these chapters from Daniel's and his friends' perspective.

- How do I survive my test?

- How do I remain faithful?
- How do I receive my miracle?
- How do I come through the fire?

But what if we read them from the king's perspective?

What did he learn about God by watching people who refused to abandon their faith?

"Sometimes God allows a test in your life because someone watching you needs to see what trusting Him looks like."

That doesn't mean every difficulty is deliberately arranged as a spectacle for someone else. It means our suffering is not beyond God's ability to redeem, and our faithfulness can testify to people we may never realize are watching.

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose. (Romans 8:28)

Sometimes the greatest witness is a believer who continues to worship when the outcome is not what they had prayed for.

The Christian testimony is not that faith always prevents suffering; it's that God remains faithful and His redemptive purposes are not defeated by suffering.

"Your faith is never more visible than when it's being tested."

For most of us, our Babylon isn't a literal furnace. It's our workplace, our family, a medical diagnosis, financial pressure, a painful relationship, or an uncertain future.

Perhaps our language through a trial can grow from simply

"God, I know you are going to get me through this."

to also:

"God, who needs to see You through the way I walk through this?"

Conviction under pressure is unshakable faith.

Alter Call:

1. **Salvation**
2. **I'm under pressure right now, and I need to bring it to God, as Daniel did.**

3. **God, I don't know how it will all turn out, but today I declare my trust is in you.
Help me let my light shine during this time of uncertainty.**