

Speaking to the soul



God's deliverance

“Look!” Nebuchadnezzar shouted. “I see four men, unbound, walking around in the fire unharmed! And the fourth looks like a god!” Daniel 3:25

Nebuchadnezzar was an incredibly powerful king, and he was used to getting his own way. When Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego defied his command to worship his vast golden statue, he was determined that they should suffer, and his fiery furnace seemed like a fairly decisive punishment. To ensure their immediate death, he had the

furnace heated up seven times hotter than usual. It was so hot that it killed the soldiers who threw them into it. Nebuchadnezzar watched the spectacle believing they would be burned to a cinder, but the outcome was completely different. Not only were they not burned, but they weren't even singed and, more amazingly, he saw that they were accompanied by a fourth person, who he assumed must be a god. This was more than enough to change Nebuchadnezzar's mind and cause him to worship the God of the young Jewish men. As a result, he gave them even higher positions in the province of Babylon.

Many of us will have been brought up with this amazing account of God's deliverance from the fiery furnace, and its message is important for every generation. It tells us that God is not necessarily going to help us to avoid disaster and suffering. Our lives might face pain, brokenness and times of failure and rejection, but, through it all, God promises to be with us. God's words in the prophecy of Isaiah describe this most powerfully. "Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have called you by name; you are mine. When you go through deep waters, I will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown. When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up; the flames will not consume you. For I am the Lord, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour" (Isaiah 43:1-3).

As we look to the future, we can be confident, not because of an absence of challenges and problems, but because of the certainty that God will never leave our side.

QUESTION

How does this amazing incident help you as you think about your own future?

PRAYER

Lord God, I thank you that you promise to be with me for time and eternity. Amen

Photo - Last week near Bellarena, Limavady

