

# Great Stories of the Bible — 2/2/22

## The Fiery Furnace

### TEXT — Daniel 3:1-30

**INTRO** —Three Jewish men dare to defy the ruler of Babylon! The key lesson from this story is that they wouldn't compromise. Compromise is not in the Bible but many warnings are given against it.

To compromise is to make concessions or accommodations for someone who does not agree with a certain set of standards or rules.

There are times when compromise is good and right—compromise is a basic skill needed in marriage, for example, and in other situations in which keeping the peace is more desirable than getting one's own way.

**Daniel and his three friends essentially worked out a compromise with the Babylonian official concerning their diet Daniel 1:8-14**

In certain other matters, compromise is not good.

The Bible makes it clear that God does not condone disobedience to what He has commanded you;

**Deu 5:32** *Ye shall observe to do therefore as the LORD your God hath commanded you: ye shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.*

God is holy, and His ways are right. God is good. Concerning matters that God has clearly addressed, we do not negotiate, bargain, or compromise.

**King Jehoshaphat** foolishly entered a compromising situation with the wicked King Ahab, and it almost cost him his life **2 Chronicles 18**.

**Jesus rebuked the church of Thyatira for their theological and moral compromise:**

**There are certain lines that should not be crossed, and there are times when compromise becomes evil.**

As we go through this world, we will hear many calls to compromise. The “fleeting pleasures of sin” **Hebrews 11:25**

“hollow and deceptive philosophy” **Colossians 2:8** *Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.*

“the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life” **1 Jn 2:16**.

Usually, the temptation to compromise is heightened by some type of fear, such as the fear of being rejected or criticized.

What makes compromise so dangerous is the subtle way it approaches us.

Compromise, by definition, doesn't involve a wholesale capitulation to worldly ways or ideals; rather, it accommodates them.

**Things of little importance:**

- **The color of the church carpet?**
- **Where to place the flags?**
- **Who should clean the church?**

**But there should be no compromise over values and the standards that stem from those values. Here are some examples of things about which we should not compromise:**

- The essentials of the Christian faith **1 Corinthians 15:3-6)**
- The preaching of the Word **2 Timothy 4:2**
- The lordship and authority of Christ **Luke 16:13**
- Your personal convictions **Romans 14:5**
- Moral issues, as defined in Scripture **1 Corinthians 6:18**

**Avoidance of worldliness is taught in many Scriptures.**

**1 Jn 2:15-17** *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.*

**Modesty is related to holiness.**

**1 Ti 2:9** *In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;*

**1 Pe 3:3-5** *Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; 4 But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. 5 For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands:*

**Music is moral.**

**Some associations should be avoided.**

**2 Co 6:14** *Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?*

**To remove standards of right and wrong that differ from the world is necessary to make our preaching significant.**

### I. The Challenge for the Young Men

There is a twenty-year interval between this chapter and the events in **Dan 2:1-49**. the king tried to force the entire empire to be idol-worshippers.

**The three Hebrew children's response:**

**Dan 3:17-18** *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. 18 But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.*

**Rom 13:1-14** tells believers to obey rulers and laws,

**Acts 5:29 and Acts 4:19** make it clear that no Christian is to disobey the Lord by obeying the government.

When the government tries to control our conscience and tell us how to worship, we obey God rather than human beings, regardless of the cost.

#### **A. Persecution**

Christians should expect the furnace of persecution if they are wholly dedicated to Christ. *“Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you” 1Pe 4:12.*

**Php 1:29** *For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;*

#### **B. Preservation**

God will never forsake His own when they go through the fiery trial. He may not keep us out of the furnace, but He will go with us and bring us through for His glory. **Isa 43:2** *When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.*

**When the king looked into the furnace, he saw four men** — and one of them was Jesus Christ. They did not even smell of the fire

#### **C. Promotion**

Their experience glorified God before others (**1Co 6:19-20**), and the king promoted them and gave them honors. **First the suffering, then the glory.**

## **II. The World System**

**“Babylon” is more than a city or an empire; it represents a system.**

It is God’s name for Satan’s system in this world.

Babylon started in **Gen 10:10**; it was the work of Nimrod, that “mighty rebel against the Lord.”

Babylon stands for our rebellion against the Lord and our substitutes for what the Lord gives us.

In **Gen 11:1-32** we see Babel in its rebellion against God, a human attempt at worldwide unity politically and religiously.

**We see the final development of this false system in Revelation 17-18, the material, cultural, and religious systems of the world all united in one world federation.** God will permit this “one world” system to grow, and then He will destroy it once for all.

**(Rev 18:4-5).** Like the three Hebrew men, we must take our stand against Babylon and bear witness to the truth of God’s Word.

## **III. The Last Days**

We have here a picture of events in the last days..

**2 Th 2:1-17 and Rev 13:1-18** both make it clear that Satan will have a “heyday” after the Christians are raptured and taken to heaven.

He will raise up a world ruler, the Antichrist, who (like Nebuchadnezzar) will conquer the nations and establish a totalitarian government.

The church will be gone, but there will be 144,000 Jewish believers sealed by the Lord and protected from Satan’s devices (**Rev 7:1-8; Rev 14:1-5**).

The Antichrist will set up his own image and force the world to worship it but the faithful Jews will not bow down.

Like the Hebrews in Babylon, the 144,000 will serve God and God will protect them.

**CONCL –**

**The stage is set. “The coming of the Lord draws nigh.” Before Jesus returns, we Christians may have to go through the “furnace of fire,” but we need not fear, for He is with us. And far better to go through a furnace of fire than to live in a lake of fire for all eternity.**