

Kings and Kingdoms: Tested by Fire

A Fiery Trial of Faith

1st Peter 1:6 -7

6 In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials,

7 so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

- Perhaps with this imagery, Peter had **Daniel 3** in mind as he wrote to the “elect exiles.”
 - We are all promised grieving trials that will test the genuineness of our faith.
- Where do we draw the lines while living under a secular government and within an idolatrous culture?
 - Are there appropriate times to compromise?
 - How do we make these complicated choices?

The Plains of Dura in the Land of Shinar

Genesis 11:2 – 5

2 And as people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there.

3 And they said to one another, “Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly.” And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar.

4 Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth.”

5 And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man had built.

Unifying the Government Under the Head of Gold

Satraps - the highest political officials in each province. It means “protector of the realm.”

Prefects (princes) - the military chiefs.

Governors (captains) - the heads of sections of the provinces.

Counselors (advisers, judges) - the high-ranking judges.

Treasurers - the superintendents of the treasury.

Justices - the secondary judges

Magistrates (sheriffs) - the lower-level legal officials



His Idol Threat was No Idle Threat

Jeremiah 29:20 - 22

20 Hear the word of the LORD, all you exiles whom I sent away from Jerusalem to Babylon:

21 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning Ahab the son of Kolaiah and Zedekiah the son of Maaseiah, who are prophesying a lie to you in my name: Behold, I will deliver them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and he shall strike them down before your eyes.

22 Because of them this curse shall be used by all the exiles from Judah in Babylon: "The LORD make you like Zedekiah and Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire,"

“And Who Is the God Who Will Deliver You Out of My Hands?”

Exodus 5:2 But Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, and moreover, I will not let Israel go."

Exodus 20:3 – 5a

3 "You shall have no other gods before me.

4 "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

5 You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God...

Considering Verses 17 and 18 – “If, But if Not”

- Important to consider the meaning and syntax of the Aramaic word ܐܝܬܝܢ (*'itay*) and the normal sense of *'itay* is existence.
 - They are likely not doubting whether “if” their God will deliver them, or “if not.”
 - Their response more logically seems to be an implicit reference back to Nebuchadnezzar’s comment in verse 15, which denied the existence of a god capable of delivering from his power.

Daniel 3:17 – 18 NET

17 If our God whom we are serving exists(ܐܝܬܝܢ, *'itay*), he is able to rescue us from the furnace of blazing fire, and he will rescue us, O king, from your power as well.

18 But if he does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we don’t serve your gods, and we will not pay homage to the golden statue that you have erected.”

Not Easy, But Simple – We Will Not Bow

1st Peter 4:12 – 13

12 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.

13 But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.

