

**"THE REWARD OF FAITH AND COURAGE"****Introduction**

1. The Jews in Babylon – 70 years
2. The reason for it
3. Yet – God was with His people

**1. THE ACCUSATION: v.**

- 1) Those who made it:
- 2) The motives behind it:
  - (i) zeal for false religion
  - (ii) jealousy of their position
  - (iii) hatred towards the Lord's people  
**DOCTRINE:** It is a very displeasing thing to God to introduce any law which is a trap to his own people.
- 3) The believer must expect such treatment:
  - (i) the believer / unbeliever are opposites
  - (ii) it reflects their hatred of God
  - (iii) "blessed are ye when..."  
**APPLICATION:** Our attitude to God's people shows if we are of them or not.
- 4) DUTY: Not to please men, however powerful, if it means sinning against God.  
**ILLUSTRATION:** Blackness Castle: the two Margarets  
**APPLICATION:** Make it your rule: Better to suffer than to sin

**2. THE BOLD ANSWER**

- 1) We do not know where Daniel was – perhaps abroad on government business.

- 2) See the exemplary courage of these men
  - (i) the intimidating decree
  - (ii) the psychological pressure of the music
  - (iii) the known character of the king
  - (iv) the severity of the punishment  
**OBSERVE:** We should be grateful to God that others' sufferings and faithfulness have brought us our modern freedoms.
- 3) Notice this answer:
  - (i) It is courteous but fearless
  - (ii) It shows great faith in God
  - (iii) It prefers suffering to sinning
  - (iv) There is not the least compromise
  - (v) It flowed from love to God and His Law  
**DOCTRINE:** "The righteous is bold as a lion".
- 4) How do people grow so bold?
  - (i) they feed on God's Word
  - (ii) they hold daily fellowship with Him
  - (iii) they live a holy life
  - (iv) they are full of the Spirit of God  
**ILLUSTRATION:** Acts 4: "...been with Jesus".

**3. THE CONSEQUENCES**

- 1) The King's fury – "one last chance"!
- 2) The furnace – seven-times hotter!
  - (i) sin overreaches itself
  - (ii) the deaths of the servants
  - (iii) those who hurt God's people pay a high price sooner or later
- 3) The King's curiosity – some window or hole for him to peer through:
  - (i) the cruelty of man's heart
  - (ii) the folly of leaving God out of it  
**OBSERVE:** man always leaves God out of his reckoning: Haman / Belshazzar / Jews who tried to destroy Christ.

4) The Miracle

- (i) consider the greatness of it
- (ii) see the love of God in it to those who are faithful to Him
- (iii) see the Mediator's presence here.  
**OBSERVE:** The promise is: Isaiah 43 "I will be with thee".  
The secret was: "By faith...quenched the violence of fire".  
**APPLICATION:** Let us do what is right – God will certainly be with us if we do.

4. **THE FINAL RESULT**

- 1) The King is altered:
  - (i) v.24: astonishment at the miracle
  - (ii) v.26: what a change of tone!
- 2) The faithful witnesses are honoured  
v.28: these three men are praised by the King for their disobedience to his command. See v.30
- 3) The true religion is advanced  
v.29: God is honoured in Babylon as never before.

**APPLICATION**

This boldness is needed in life and we should pray for it in our own day:

**ILLUSTRATION:** Andrew Melville to the King.

<p><b>PSALM</b></p> <p><b>2: 1 – 7</b></p> <p><b>94: 11 – 16</b></p> <p><b>126: 1 - 6</b></p>
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