

DEVOTIONAL

(5 DAYS)



STUDY BY: TATUM BUOY

DEVOTIONAL PURPOSE:

In this walk (*or should I say race?*) called life, we can't escape the troubles of this broken world. And while we know that everything good comes from above, it can be hard to see the difference between a fiery arrow of the enemy, and a purifying fire from God. Because let's face it, fire is fire. And when we walk more in the flesh than in the spirit, we can't help but feel the heat. Through this journey, you will discover the difference, and find a renewed sense of faith, hope, and endurance for this race we're all running.

"As for me, my life has already been poured out as an offering to God. The time of my death is near. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained faithful."

(2 Timothy 4:6-7).

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THE PURIFYING FIRE

DAY ONE: (THE THREE MEN + 1)

“And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell bound into the fiery furnace. The king Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and rose up in haste. He declared to his counselors, “Did we not cast three men bound into the fire?” To which they answered, “Yes king.” He answered and said, “But I see four men unbound, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth man is like a son of the gods.” (Daniel 3:23-25)

- In the book of Daniel, we read of a fiery furnace that was meant to kill these three men, but the outcome isn't what was expected. The king Nebuchadnezzar made the horrible mistake of discarding the earlier words of these men, “Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the fiery furnace.” (Daniel 3:17)
- What we should take notice to in this story, is that as we read, God not only delivered these faithful men from the fiery furnace, but He was also *in the fire with them*.
- We often make the mistake of thinking God has abandoned us in our troubles. But instead of seeing the fire through the lens of the enemy, which is a fire to kill, we should train our eyes to see through the lens of faith; “Our God can deliver us.” And because our God is not a god to leave His people in their troubles, if we lose sight of that reality, the fire may begin to burn us, *even though* God is in the fire with us, to protect us.
- When the fire (any situation that) we're facing has been sent to kill, steal, or destroy something in our life, we can rest assured it is from the enemy, not God. And whatever we may be facing, we can be confident that our God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Knowing this, *believing this*, we can know that God has not abandoned us in the fire, but is in the fire with us. So, while the enemy may start a fire in your life, meaning it for harm, when we are faithful in our belief that God can and will deliver us, God will be there with us, *in the fire with us*, and He will always turn it for our good.

** If the enemy has started a 'fire' in your life, ask God to reveal His presence in the fire with you. Ask God to remind you of His faithfulness in the fire, and remind you that you are **not** alone, He is there with you. Remember that even though the enemy is able to bring trouble to this currently broken world, God has victory, and He **will** work it for your good, through your faith in Him.*

SEE ALSO:

- ❖ Genesis 50:20
- ❖ Psalm 34:8

DAY TWO: (THE MAN FROM UZ)

“While he was speaking, there came another servant that said, “The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the livestock and servants, consuming them, and I alone have escaped to tell you” (Job 1:16)

- In the book of Job, it was a regular day for him and his family when servants began rushing in to tell Job of a horrible incident that just took place. One by one they told him of all the things he just lost, his livestock, children, property, etc. The servants told Job it was all gone, and it was because “the fire of God fell from heaven.”
- What’s important to recognize in this story is that first, the book begins with a story that takes place in the heavenly courtroom, *to give us context*. Because of this context, we know a few things:
 - Job is righteous, this is not judgement.
 - Satan is the cause of the destruction.
 - God has a hand of protection on Job.
- When life begins to go horribly wrong, (or sometimes even mildly inconveniently) we often make the mistake of blaming God. But with the context of this story, God tells us again, the destruction coming to Job, *is from the enemy*. Job did not deserve it, this was not judgement against Job, and God had protection over him.
- So why then do we see in verse 16, Job’s servant claiming that this fire was from God? Well, “then the Lord rained on Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur and fire from the Lord out of heaven” (Genesis 19:24). Job and his servants did not know what we know, which is that Satan is the cause of this fire. They only know that the Lord can rain fire as an act of judgement, and because of this, his servant immediately pointed his finger at God. But Job did not.

**When things go wrong in our life, for many of us, our immediate reaction is likened to the servant, blaming God. My challenge is that we look at the context God always provides for us in His Word. Satan loves to bring destruction into our lives at an attempt to make us blame God (1:9-11), but can we have the faith of Job? Knowing who our God is and remembering that Satan is the source of destruction. Instead of pointing fingers in the wrong direction, ask God to help you see the context of your situation so that you may have faith like Job, “Then Job arose, tore his robe, shaved his head, and fell down and worshipped” (Job 1:20).*

DAY THREE: (STANDING ON HOLY GROUND)

“The angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire, out of the midst of a bush. He looked, and behold, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed” (Exodus 3:2)

- In the book of Exodus, Moses steps foot on Holy ground. The angel of the Lord appears to him through a bush that is raging with fire, but not consumed. *This is a Holy fire.* “Then He said, “do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place you are standing on is Holy ground” (Exodus 3:5).
- When the presence of God draws near to us, its often accompanied with a Holy fire. This fire is raging, but does not consume what is also Holy.
- The Holy fire of God does two things; it burns away what is not holy, and refines what is holy. (This is present with the Holy Spirit today, He is still likened to a Holy fire because when He enters our lives, He burns away what is unholy, and refines what is holy)
- Thanks to our savior Jesus Christ, when we accept Him into our lives, He blesses us with the gift of the Holy Spirit. And the purpose of this gift is so that “you shall be holy, for I am Holy” (1 Peter 1:16). God has blessed us with His very own Spirit, His Holy Spirit, so that we can also be holy. *And the fire of God, only burns what doesn't belong to God.*
- Contrary to the enemy's fire, which comes to kill, steal, or destroy something in our lives in an attempt to have us turn away from God, the children of God have the Holy Spirit to keep them from getting burnt. The Holy fire of God comes into our life to refine us, not harm us.

**When a fire burns its way into your life, ask God to reveal its purpose to you; is this here to harm me, or is this here to purify me? One fire is meant to pull you away from God and cause you to blame Him, the other is meant to bring you closer. “Then the Lord said, I have seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cries. I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians and bring them into a land filled with milk and honey” (Exodus 3:7-8).*

DAY FOUR: (HERE I AM, SEND ME)

“Then one of the seraphim angels flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with the tongs from the altar. And he touched my mouth and said, “this has touched your lips, your guilt is taken away, your sin atoned for” (Isaiah 6:6-7)

- In the book of Isaiah, God is looking for someone to send into the nations and prophesy for Him, “I heard the voice of the Lord say, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us-?” (Isaiah 6:8a). And we see that Isaiah agrees to be sent, “Here I am, send me” (8b).
- God wants to send us into the nations, to proclaim to them all that He has done, and will do. But just like Isaiah, something needs to happen first. Backing up to an earlier verse we see that there is a reason for Isaiah being purified, “Woe is me, For I am lost; I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts” (Isaiah 6:5).
- Many of us want to be used by God, and even pray that He uses us, and wonder why He *seemingly* doesn’t answer immediately.
 - *If we want to be the mouthpiece of God to the nations, God must first purify our mouth.*
- If we are going to ask God, “Here I am, send me”, then we need to be aware that He is not going to send us immediately, but instead will purify us first. “Put on your new nature, created to be like God- truly righteous and holy. Stop telling lies, don’t let anger control you; don’t use foul language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be encouraging to those who hear them” (Ephesians 4:24-25, 4:29).

**If you are looking to be used by God and have prayed and asked to be sent and used as His mouthpiece. Remember that God must send fire to purify us first. We can’t be His mouthpiece, if our mouth is not clean like His. If you’ve recently asked God to use you, and a (Holy) fire shows up, ask Him to reveal what needs purified.*

SEE ALSO:

- ❖ Proverbs 10:11
- ❖ James 3:1-10

DAY FIVE: (THE ARMOR OF GOD)

“Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil” (Ephesians 6:11).

- In the letter to the Ephesians, Paul reminds us that there are unseen forces at work in our daily life. And some of these forces are evil, seeking to divide our newfound unity in God. So, Paul instructs us to arm ourselves with the armor of God, and stand firm, so that the enemy's efforts do not prosper.
- Arming ourselves with the armor looks like this:
 - Belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, gospel shoes, shield of faith, helmet of salvation, sword of the spirit (Ephesians 6:14-17).
- As believers, we must take this instruction seriously. We need to be able to tell the difference between the fiery arrows of the enemy, and the purifying fire of God. And in order to do this, we need to be armed with certain things; We need to be secure in the Truth, our hearts set on righteousness, being willing and ready to bring the good news to others, we need to protect our faith with a shield, blocking the lies of the enemy. Keeping a firm belief in our salvation, and knowing the Word of God, is what we need to be rooted with.
- When the enemy comes to kill, steal, or destroy something in your life, our instructions are to be fully armed. Instead of falling for the schemes of the devil like Job's servant, have the armor of God like Job. Have the faith like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to say, “our God will deliver us.” Seeking the righteousness that purified Isaiah and readying yourselves to be sent to the nations and be God's mouthpiece. Recognize that you are now holy ground, in Jesus Christ, and the purifying fire God sends, will never destroy what is also holy.

Once you've armed yourself with the armor of God, the schemes and lies of the devil that are meant to harm you and pull you away from God, attempting to have you blame Him instead of our enemy, will not prosper any longer. And remember, once you're armed, you're not called to do anything more than **stand firm. The battle against the enemy belongs to God, and the armor is given to you for protection against attacks, not to send you into battle. “Therefore, take up the whole armor of God so that you may withstand the evil, and having done all, stand firm” (Ephesians 6:13).*

SEE ALSO:

- ❖ Exodus 14:14