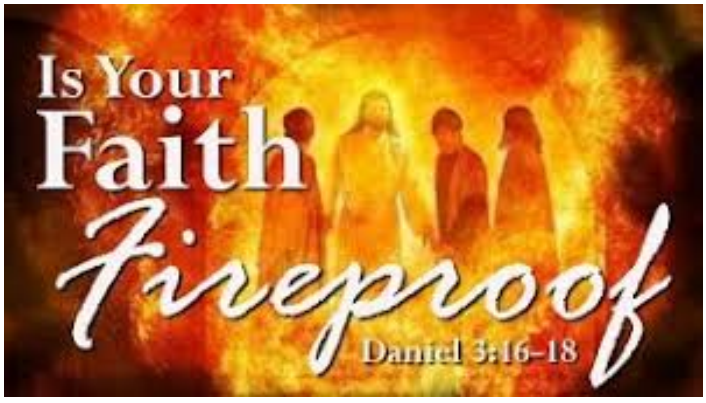
–Save This Page as a PDF–

The Jews Confess Their Faith
3: 16-18

The Jews confess their faith DIG: What were the three Hebrews concerned with? How did they challenge king Nebuchadnezzar? Why are believers who fast and pray not healed? As we get closer to the Second Coming of Messiah, what kinds of compromises do you think we will face as a people of faith?

REFLECT: Is your faith fireproof? How do you think it would feel to make a choice of faith that you knew could very easily result in your own death? How would you define the kind of faith that gives you the strength not to conform? When has ADONAI carried you through tough times because of your obedience?

True faith doesn't look for loopholes; it simply obeys God.



After being threatened with death by **the Babylonian king** (**to see link click Bn – Dani'el's Friends Questioned**) **Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to him, "King Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter (3:16).** There was nothing **the three** could say in **their** own defense. **They** were technically guilty, but **they** had also been misrepresented. **They** could make excuses, but true **faith** doesn't look for loopholes; it simply obeys **God** and knows that **He** will do what is best. **Faith** rests on commands and

promises, not arguments and explanations. Times of adversity are usually times of opportunity, especially when **ADONAI's people** are being persecuted for **their faith**. **Yeshua** says: **You will be handed over to the local councils and beaten in the synagogues. You will stand trial before governors and kings because you are My followers. But this will be your opportunity to tell them about Me (Mark 13:9 NLT). The three** courageous **Jews** weren't concerned about **themselves**, nor were **they** afraid of **the fury** of **the king**. **Their** only concern was obeying **YHVH** and giving a **faithful** witness to all who were watching and listening. **Their** attitude was respectful and **their** words were few and carefully chosen.[133]

Then **the Jews** responded with a challenge of **their** own, saying: **If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty's hand. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego** did not presume to predict what the outcome would be in **their** case. If **God** were our **servant**, our **assistant**, **He** would be predictable: **He** would always do our bidding. However, those **young men** understood that since **God** is **Sovereign**, it was ***His*** choice whether **He** opted to be glorified in **their** deaths or through **their** dramatic deliverance. Either way, **they** would not compromise **their** commitment to **the LORD**. Live or die, **they** would be **faithful** to **their God**.[134]

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego had witnessed **ADONAI's** power over the false gods of **Babylon** in that matter of **the king's dream** (see **Aw – The King's Dream**), and **they** had studied the TaNaKh. This included the accounts of the great wonders **YHVH** had performed for **Isra'el**, miracles that those **young men** would have heard and believed. There was no question in **their** minds that the **God** who divided the Sea of Reeds and performed the other miracles in delivering **Isra'el** from Egypt, could do the same for **them** . . . if that was **His** will. This explains the confidence **they** exhibited when **they** declared: **But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the statue of gold you have set up (3:17-18).** Even if **they** had to suffer a horrible, painful death in a burning oven, **they** refused to abandon **their God** and worship idols.

This is an important lesson for believers today. **The Lord** may allow trials to come into our lives to build character or for a number of other reasons **(Romans 5)**. The purpose for our trials may not be understood, but **God** simply asks that we **trust/believe/have faith** in **Him** – even when it's not easy. As **Job**, who endured incredible suffering, exclaimed: **Though He slay me, yet will I hope in Him (Job**

13:15a). Although **God** does not guarantee us that we will never suffer or experience death, **He** does promise always to be with us. In times of trial our attitude should be that of these **young men**. As **Messiah** told **His** apostles: **Do not be afraid of the One who can destroy both but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both the soul and the body in hell (Matthew 10:28).** This explains the confidence exhibited by **Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego** as **they** declared: **But even if he does not save us, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up (3:17-18).** Similar words have been uttered countless times throughout the centuries as believers have suffered martyrdom for **the Lord**. Certainly, those **Hebrews** were convinced that even if **they** perished in the flames, there was a better life beyond with father Abraham and the righteous of the TaNaKh.[135]

This was the finest hour of these **three confessors**. **Their faith** did not hold fast simply by accident or by the decision of the moment. It had grown strong because in previous tests **they** had grown strong in **faith** as **they** had **given glory to God (Romans 4:20)**. As **they** looked back on the crisis of the **fiery** trial, **they** must have seen the previous tests in a new light. Their significance was to prepare **them** for this monumental crisis so that through **their faithfulness** to **ADONAI** would echo down throughout the ages.[136]

Hebrews 11 lists the names and deeds of great men and women of **faith**, including these **three Jewish men (Hebrews 11:34a)**, but in **Hebrews 11:36**, the writer says: **“And others,”** and then lists **people** who seem to be failures in spite of **their faith** (see the commentary on **Hebrews Cv – Faith Through Trials**). The Greek word for **“others”** means *others of a different kind*. That is, others who had **faith** but didn’t see **Ha’Shem** do the miracles **He** did for those listed in **Hebrews 11:1-35**. **The LORD** always rewards **faith**, but **He** doesn’t always step in and perform special miracles. Not everyone who prays is healed, but **God** always gives strength to bear the pain and the grace to face death without fear. **The three young men** believed that **God** could deliver **them**, but **they** would **trust Him** even if **He** didn’t. That is how **faith** is supposed to operate in our lives.[137]

Even though the fig trees have no blossoms, and there are no grapes on the vines; even though the olive crop fails, and the fields lie empty and barren; even though the flocks die in the fields, and the cattle barns are

empty, yet I will rejoice in ADONAI! I will be joyful in God my Savior. ELOHIM Adonai is my strength; He makes my feet swift and sure-footed as a dear, He enables me to stand on high places (Habakkuk 3:17-19).

*Dear heavenly **Father**, praise **You** for **Your** great and painful sacrifice that **You** willingly paid to redeem me **(Hebrews 12:2, Second Corinthians 5:21)**. How blessed I am that **Your** love does not stop at redeeming me, but **You** continue to work in mt life to mold and purify me to be more like **Messiah**. **In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, 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 Yeshua Messiah (First Peter 1:6-7).** Thank **You** for turning painful **trials** on their head, and for using **them** to help me to grow more like **You**, **ADONAI,** in my character. It is so wonderful that **Your** wisdom and love work together to make something beautiful out of **trials** by shaping my inner being to produce **endurance**, **character** and **hope**. **We rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us (Romans 5:2b-5).** In **Messiah Yeshua's** holy **Name** and power of **His** resurrection. Amen*