

*Precepts for Life*  
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Precept Ministries International  
P.O. Box 182218, Chattanooga, TN 37422-7218  
1-800-763-1990 / [www.preceptsforlife.com](http://www.preceptsforlife.com)

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**SERIES: Daniel**

**FRIDAY** (1/14/05)

**OPEN**

What would you do my friend if you found yourself in a situation where all of a sudden your convictions, your beliefs were put on trial, where you had a decision to make and there were people standing around wondering, wondering if you would give in, wondering if you would compromise, wondering if you would just brush the situation off or if you would take it as an opportunity to serve God? What would you do?

**PART ONE**

In our last program I introduced you to the story of Esther An Kim. Esther An Kim was a Korean woman who lived in Korea during the World War II. And the Japanese had occupied Korea. And in their occupation of Korea, because the war was not going their way, they became very, very panicked and they decided that the Koreans needed to bow down and worship their gods at the Shinto Shrine. And so they would all of a sudden call a time when everybody would empty the schools and they would walk up to the Shinto Shrine and there at the sound of the gong, they would all bow down.

This was to appease their gods. This was to help them to win the war, a war that they felt that they were in and that they should win and that would make them so powerful. Well Esther An Kim was a teacher in a Christian school and Esther An Kim, every time they had to do something like that, she happened to be absent. But this one day they were all gathered together and the principal said we are required to take the children and go to the Shinto Shrine and to bow down and worship their god. Now I know that some of you do not believe in their god and I know Esther An Kim, that you do not believe in their god, but I'm telling you today that it will not hurt for you to bow down because you know in your heart that you love God. And I'm a Christian too, I'm going to bow down because God understands, because if we don't we're going to incur the wrath of the Japanese on this school and don't you do that to me Esther An Kim. Don't you refuse to bow down. Well as they started up in this procession and all the school walking together, Miss Kim was wondering what do I do God? And she heard the children behind her and she knew that what she did would impact the others, that it would send a very strong message. And as she walked and prayed the Lord brought to her mind the three young men that we've been studying in Daniel, chapter 3, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. They did not bow. They would not bow. They were willing to burn before they bowed. And she knew that she could not bow. And so when the gong went off, when they struck the gong and everybody was to bow so very, very low, there was one lone figure standing up. It was Esther An Kim. The police saw her. They seized her; they grabbed her out of that crowd and they hauled her off to the local jail. And this captain was just absolutely furious with her and yelling at her and threatening her because she had not bowed down because she had ah defied the royal imperial Japanese army. And all of a sudden as he was getting ready to beat her and put her in prison, all of a sudden he was called out of the office. It was very urgent. She sat there in the office and all of a sudden it was as if a voice spoke aloud to her and that voice said to her, run,

run. And so she took off. She ran out of that office and she ran, and she ran into hiding. And the Japanese began to look for her and yet she was protected. She was protected for a while. And then God laid another mission on her heart. Because she spoke fluent Japanese, God laid on her heart that she was to get on a train and that she was to travel and she was to travel across Korea. She was to get into Japan and she was to go to the Japanese Diet. And when she got to the Japanese Diet, God had instructed her that she was to drop from the balcony of that meeting place... Now the Japanese Diet is like our congress or like our senate. And she was to drop a scroll and the message on that scroll was to be this: If Japan does not repent then God will send fire and destruction from heaven on Japan; an awful, awful thing that would happen to them and she was required to tell them. She went with a man that God sent to her door. This man had been praying and God had laid on her heart, on his heart that he had called this woman Esther An Kim to go and do something for the Lord and that he was to go and he was to accompany her. When he showed up at her door, he just looked at her. She was so small; she looked so frail; she looked so weak. And he looked at her and he says God told me that I am to come and I'm to help you do what God has called you to do. But what are you? You're just a woman, so I'm to go along as a man. Well she could get her passport into Japan because of the work that she had done and because she spoke fluent Japanese, but he had no passport. They got on the transportation. They got on the train. As they were going through and traveling through Japan, they were coming through and checking passports. And that man just sat up in the train just like this; he has no passport. She looked behind; she was absolutely disgusted with him. She knew that they would come past her, go to him and he didn't have a passport and why wasn't he hiding, or why wasn't he doing something? And she sat there just in absolute terror. She showed her passport. The officer walked beyond her checking every other passport. When and she kind of turned around, and when he got to the man that was her traveling companion he

walked right past him as if he never saw him. He never asked for the passport. They got to the Japanese Diet. They took that scroll and when it was in session they dropped that scroll from the balcony. This time she was arrested. This time she was taken to prison. You ought to read the book. You ought to read the book. It's absolutely incredible. But this is when she was released from prison. She spent a long time in that prison. Her health was broken, but God honored her faith. She was released from prison on the day that the bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. God had rained down fire, the fire of judgment on Japan. There is a God in heaven. And when He calls you to do a task for Him, when He calls you to be His child He never leaves you, He never forsakes you. You can boldly say the Lord is my helper. I will not fear what man shall do unto me. Listen, any trial that you and I go through, any fiery furnace, any furnace of blazing fire that we walk into, whether it's a literal furnace or whether it is a figurative furnace, we never walk alone. There is a fourth man, so to speak, in the fire with us and he is one like the Son of God. He is the Son of God. And He will never leave you. He will never forsake you. So you need to determine that whatever circumstance you find yourself in, that a sovereign God has permitted that circumstance. And that sovereign God has promised you as 1 Corinthians 10:13 says, it is not more than you can bear. God will make a way of escape that you might be able to bear it. And that way of escape, many times, is just in a sense, feeling His arm under your arm, that unseen arm, that unseen touch on your shoulder, that unheard voice to the rest of the people saying be faithful. You're not alone. I am standing with you. I will not leave you, nor forsake you. This is your opportunity to show people the reality of your faith. And that's what Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego did. They showed the reality of their faith in Yahweh. Remember now, and I want to take you back to Daniel, chapter 3. It says in verse 26: Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the door of the furnace of blazing fire and you want to mark that again. And he responded and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego,

come out you servants of the Most High God. This is the first time that this name of God is used in the book of Daniel. It's used for the first time in Genesis, chapter 14, verse 18. But here it is used for the first time in the book of Daniel. And this is what he says: Come out you servants of El Elyon, E-l, and then another word E-l-y-o-n, the Most High God. Because what has Nebuchadnezzar realized now? Nebuchadnezzar has realized now that there is a God that is the Most High God and He is higher than his god. Because remember, what did Nebuchadnezzar say to those young men? And who is able to deliver you out of my hand, if you don't bend, if you don't bow? And you and I always need to know what Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego knew; and that is God is able. He is the God of the impossible. He is the God of all flesh, he says in Jeremiah, and nothing is too difficult for Him. So he goes on to say come out you servants of Most High God and come here. Then Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego came out of the midst of the fire. And the satraps, and the prefects, and the governors and the king's high officials gathered around and saw in regard to these men; now listen carefully, that the fire had no effect on their bodies, on the bodies of these men, nor was the hair of their head singed, nor were their trousers damaged, nor had the smell of fire even come upon them. Listen, when they came out a fire, a fire permitted by God and when they refused to bow, they refused to bend, and they walked into that fire trusting the God of the impossible, they came out and they didn't even smell like smoke. That's what's going to happen to you and me beloved when we walk into those fires and we stand for God.

## **PART TWO**

When you look at these three guys. When they went into the fire, they were all tied up. I mean they were tied up in their trousers and their shirt and everything. They went into that fire bound. Listen; when they came out there

was no ties on them, nothing to bind them up. And this is what happens when you stand for the Lord, when you refuse to bend, when you refuse to bound, ah, bow, when you say I'd rather burn than bend or bow, than compromise my God. I'd rather take the consequences. I want to tell you something. There is a freedom there because you, all of a sudden, are let loose from those cords that bind you to the approbation of man, or bind you to your desires. And all of a sudden you've gone through the fire, you come out; there's a new freedom, there's a new understanding, there's a new strength because you have been victorious because you did not compromise. Let me show it to you in the Word of God. Let me take you to the New Testament. I want to take you to Romans, chapter 5. In Romans, chapter 5 he's talking about what we can exult in, because we stand permanently in the grace of God once we come to know the Lord Jesus Christ. And so he says this in verse 3: Not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, knowing that it brings about perseverance and perseverance, proven character. And it says it brings proven character and proven character, hope. I mean you talk about those cords being let loose. I mean you've gone into the fire. You've stood for the Lord. You've proved that and that proven character brings forth hope. And hope does not disappoint because you see the reality of your faith. You've put it to the test or it's been put to the test and you have come out and you are no longer bound because when you were in that fire you knew the presence of God. You knew the assurance of God. You knew the victory of faith. I want to take you to one other scripture and it's 1 Peter, chapter 4. Listen to what it says. Therefore, verse 1, since Christ has suffered in the flesh arm yourselves also with the same purpose. In other words, be ready to suffer. Be ready to suffer in the flesh. Be ready to suffer now, while you're living in this body, in this society, in this culture as a child of God. So he says arm yourselves with the same purpose. Why? Because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin. In other

words, when you determine that you're going to believe God, then you're not going to sin. You see the root of all sin is unbelief. So when you determine that you're willing to suffer, that you're willing to stand, that you're not going to compromise, that you're not going to give in, that you're not going to bend, that you're not going to bow, that you'll burn first, then you have ceased from sin. You have made a choice for the side of righteousness. You have made a choice to stand as a faithful one for the King of kings and to further the kingdom of God and let people see in your life the reality of your faith, so that it's not just all words, but it is deeds that follow it. And that's what the world needs to see. They need to see the deeds. They hear the words all the time, but they need to see the action. They need to see the back up of, of the fact that you're not just going to say that you believe, but you're going to act like you believe and you're not going to compromise because you do believe and you're going to stand fast for the Lord. So let's go back now to Daniel, chapter 3, in verse 28: And Nebuchadnezzar responded and said, blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. Remember they changed their names and they put them under the command of Accu and they put them as a servant of Nebo. But now he says O know, blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. Blessed be the God of Esther An Kim. Blessed be the God of all the faithful who have been willing to stand and not compromise because they know that there is a God in heaven. And when they know there's a God in heaven and we act like that on earth, then the people on earth see who our God is and they stand in awe because they know that if it had been them, they wouldn't have done what we have done. And it says who has sent His angel and delivered His servants who put their trust in Him. In every trial, in every situation, beloved, you have a choice. Are you going to put your trust in Him or are you going to put your trust in the arm of flesh? Jeremiah, chapter 17 says when you put your trust in the arm of flesh it's going to fail you. But when you trust in God and you trust God, you trust in who He is

and you trust Him, then you are blessed by God. So it says who put their trust in God, violating the king's command and yielded up their bodies so as not to serve or worship any god except their God. In other words, you're monotheistic, aren't you? You have one God and you're not going to bow before any other god. And Nebuchadnezzar, this man that was full of rage, this man that was full of wrath, this man who heated up and you could see it in his body and you could see it in his countenance, you could hear it in his words, this man who heated up the furnace seven times hotter is now, just all docile because he has seen God in action. He has seen the reality of their faith and he has seen that they are right. You need not worship any other god except their own. Therefore, therefore, I make a decree that any people, nation or tongue that speaks anything offensive against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego shall be torn limb from limb and their houses reduced to a rubbish heap. O my gosh, he's said that before. Now why, why? Because this is how brutal the Babylonians were. They literally took the disobedient and they literally tore them limb from limb. They just put ropes on them and tear them until eventually they; they'd pop out of the skin. They literally took their houses and made them a rubbish heap. Now you know that could be translated a latrine. And so remember a lot of people didn't have indoor plumbing and so they would just take their house and say okay, this house has now become a public latrine. You can, anybody can use it. And so that's what they would do. He says in as much as there is no other god who is able to deliver in this way. What did Nebuchadnezzar see? He saw three men who understood the supremacy of their God, the power of their God, the faithfulness of their God, and were willing, willing to die for Him even if He chose not to deliver them. They were willing to die because they were not willing to compromise. Do you realize what would happen in this nation if you and I had that kind of faith, if you and I would stand so true to God and refuse to bend, refuse to bow and instead, if we needed to, to burn. It says this: Then the king caused Shadrach, Meshach

**DANIEL**  
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and Abed-nego to prosper in the province of Babylon. Do not compromise your God. Because when you compromise your convictions, when you act contrary to what you have said, then what you are doing beloved, is you are compromising God.