**R790\_Rumination for Mar. 22, 2020 by K.C. Ung**

The **T**heme: **If it be so…If Not…** berita-bethel-ung.com

The **T**ext:***If it be so****, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace.* Dan. 3:17, 18

 ***If not****, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image.*

The **T**hots:

1. **The Challenge Facing the three Friends.**
2. The **D**ecree of the **D**espot [Nebuchadnezzar] Dan. 3:4-6
3. The **C**ommand: *Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded,* 3:4
4. The **C**ontents: *O people, nations, and languages, That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet…*

*ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up.* 3:5

1. The **C**orollary: W*hoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast*

 *into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.* 3:6

1. The Friends’ **D**eliberate “**D**isobedience”. Dan. 3:12
2. Their **S**tatus: *Jews whom thou hast set over the affairs of…Babylon,* *Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego*.
3. Their **S**tand: *These men, O king…serve not thy gods…nor worship the golden image*
4. The king’s **D**emand: Dan. 3:15
5. If they **D**ared to **D**efy the king: *ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace;*
6. Then would their **D**eity **D**eliver them? *And who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?*
7. The Friends’ **D**aring **D**ecision: Dan. 3:17, 18, NKJV
8. The **C**onfidence in their God - ***If*** *that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us*

 *from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king*.

1. Just in **C**ase… *But* ***if not****, let it be known to you, O king,*
2. The **C**ondition: *We do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up*
3. The **D**ictator’s **D**ispleasure and “**D**elirious” **D**eclaration. Dan. 3:17, 18, NKJV
4. *Then was Nebuchadnezzar* ***F****ull of* ***F****ury…commanded that they should*

*heat the* ***F****urnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated.* Dan. 3:19, 20

1. *He commanded the* ***M****ost* ***M****ighty* ***M****en…in his army to cast them into the burning* ***f****iery* ***f****urnace.*
2. *The* ***F****urnace* [was] *exceeding hot, the* ***F****lame of the* ***F****ire slew those* ***M****en* [instead].Dan. 3:22
3. The **D**ivine **D**eliverance that **G**lorified **G**od. Dan. 3:24-30
4. The **F**ourth **F**igure in the **F**ire 3:24, 25

*Nebuchadnezzar…said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?*

*He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.*

1. The **F**ire **F**ailed to harm the three **F**riends. 3:27

*…these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed,*

*neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them.*

1. The King’s **F**orthright **A**dmission of his **F**ailure. 3:28. 29
2. His **D**eclared **A**cknowledgement

*Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent His angel, and delivered His servants that trusted in Him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God.*

1. His **D**ecreed **A**nnouncement

*Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort.*

* Con: God’s initial non-deliverance of the three Friends seemed to show that He was not able to do

 what the three friends trusted He could do. Consequently, they were cast into the fiery furnace.

 **But at the end, their faith was Justified, the king’s decree Nullified and God Glorified!!**

1. **Cf. The Commitment Facing our Lord.** Lk. 22:42
2. The Lord was **F**aced with **F**ulfilling the **F**ather’s Will.
3. *Father,* ***if*** *Thou be willing, remove this cup from Me:*
4. *Nevertheless* **[If it be so]*****not*** *My will, but Thine, be done.*
5. **S**eemingly, the Father did not answer His **S**upplication and He **S**uffered the agony of the cross. Mk. 15:15

*Pilate…delivered Jesus, when he had* ***S****courged Him, to be crucified.*

1. The **R**esult was the Sinner’s **R**edemption and He and the Father Glorified. Lk. 23:47

*Now when the centurion saw what was done, He glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous Man*

* Today all of us in Malaysia arenotallowed to gather together as a Church to break bread,

 However even **if it be so,** we can still in spirit **R**emember and **R**evere our Lord in our **R**esidence

 ***And worship Him in Spirit and in truth.***

*Here is love, vast as the ocean, Lovingkindness as the flood,*

*When the Prince of Life, our ransom, Shed for us His precious blood.*

*Who His love will not remember? Who can cease to sing His praise?*

 *He can never be forgotten, Throughout Heav’n’s eternal days.* William Rees

**REFLECTIONS FOR THE WEEK.** **R. 790**

1. On 17th March, the Government of Malaysia announced the Movement Control Order (MCO) restricting all movements and forbidding all public gatherings to contain the spread of the pandemic Covid-19 (Corona Virus) which has infected hundreds of its citizens and caused a few deaths in the country. Hench, all religious groups, and that include churches as well, are asked to suspend their services to prevent any close proximity of the followers to contain this very contagious disease.

Christians all over the country are praying for God to intervene and heal the country.

Christians are holding special daily prayer sessions in the privacy of their homes and prayer chains on line to intercede for God’s grace to be extended not only to Malaysia,

but also, to the whole world which has now come under the disease’ infection resulting in the deaths of thousands in certain countries.

To contain this deadly disease, a Knock-Down has been declared in certain countries.

This term has been played up by someone to mean:

*“KNOCKDOWN” means, Go to your room LOCK the door call to God to experience His presence. DOWN in your knees. It’s time to pray. Amen.*

Now comes the Challenge to the Christians:

If God seemingly does not answer the prayer of the Christians immediately, does it mean, that God is not able to perform – in spite of the concentrated prayer chain and its fervency?

Or will you insist that God just must answer your prayer because you are praying in faith, trusting in His power to do things impossible, in the power of the Holy Spirit and in the Name of Jesus?

Or will you pray as the Lord Himself prayed, “*nevertheless not Mine will, but Thine be done*” because God has a greater, higher and more supreme and sublime purpose to fulfill in the working out of His almighty will which is far above all that you can think or imagine? And you are prepared to submit to His will even if it may mean you have to suffer in the process as the Lord did in doing the Father’s Will?

In the case of the three friends He allowed them to go through the trial of the fiery furnace, but He was with them and He delivered them at the end – in His own timing and in His own way and God was glorified! Are you prepared to pray such prayer and allow God to answer it in your life and in His programme for the world in His own timing and in His own way? How should you behave and act if you are to take this stand? **REFLECT**

1. On March 19, the STAR newspaper reported:

<https://www.thestar.com.my/news/world/2020/03/19/25000-people-gather-for-covid-19-prayer-session-in-bangladesh-sparking-outcry> -

*DHAKA (AFP): A massive Covid-19 prayer session with tens of thousands of devotees sparked an outcry in Bangladesh Wednesday (March 18) as the South Asian nation reported its first death from the global pandemic.*

*Local police chief Tota Miah said some 10,000 Muslims gathered in an open field in Raipur town in southern Bangladesh to pray "healing verses" from the Koran to rid the country of the deadly virus.*

*"They held the Khatme Shifa prayers after dawn to free the country from the coronavirus," Miah told AFP. Organisers claimed the number of worshippers was 25,000.*

*He said organisers did not get permission from authorities to hold the session.*

Should a person “obey his god”, gather in the thousands (the greater the number the more efficacious the prayer) against the government’s advice of not to gather in groups for fear of the spread of the contagious Covid-19 virus? After all to obey god is more important than to obey any government!

Can this be the correct approach for the Christin in relation to his God and the government? Whom should he obey? (Cf. also Rom. 13:1) **REFLECT**.

**POINTS TO PONDER:** *To Obey, or not to Obey and Whom – that is the Question.*