



Scripture nugget – Surrendering to God gives Him a free hand

King Nebuchadnezzar had a golden statue made, sixty cubits high and six cubits wide, which he set up in the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. Whoever does not fall down and worship shall be instantly cast into a white-hot furnace. King Nebuchadnezzar questioned them: “Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you will not serve my god, or worship the golden statue that I set up? Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered King Nebuchadnezzar, “There is no need for us to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If our God, whom we serve, can save us from the white-hot furnace and from your hands, O king, may He save us! But even if He will not, you should know, O king, that we will not serve your god or worship the golden statue which you set up.” (Daniel 3:1, 6, 14, 16-18).

Surrendering to God our difficulties makes our cross lighter. True surrender to God is a trustful, unconditional acceptance of our difficult situation. At times we may feel that our situation is unjust, however, we acknowledge that God permits it. As it is within God's permitting will, we can accept it for the sake of God. Thus, our attitude is changed to be more patient and peaceful. We find ourselves freed from anger and fear, and our heavy cross appears lighter. The three Jewish youths Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego decided that they would not yield to the unjust command of the Babylonian king, but would instead surrender themselves to God's mercy. They put no condition to God to save them, and were ready to die in the white-hot furnace for their unwavering faith. As it turned out, God intervened mightily and the three young men emerged from the white-hot furnace without smelling of fire or having a single hair singed, causing the pagan king to pay homage to the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego (cf. Daniel 3:91-96).

Surrendering to God our difficulties glorifies Him and gives Him a free hand to help us. God will not impose His divine will on us because He has given us free will. Due to our weak faith, we often fail to completely surrender our difficult situation to the Lord but instead are inclined to put our trust in our own limited human power, clinging tightly to our control of the situation. As a result, we encounter all kinds of obstacles and frustrations because we have not given God a free hand to help us. He can only intervene mightily when we surrender our situation to Him. Scripture recounts many instances when God intervened mightily when the situation was surrendered to Him. When our Blessed Mother Mary was discovered by Joseph, her betrothed, to be mysteriously pregnant, and who decided to divorce her, God intervened by informing Joseph in a dream that the Child was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit. When Abraham surrendered Isaac to God in filial obedience, God sent an angel to stop Abraham from sacrificing Isaac. When Stephen, the first Christian martyr was being stoned to death, God gave him a vision of heaven even before he died.

Conversation with Jesus: Precious Lord, our life on earth is an earthly pilgrimage in which God tests our faith and trust in Him. In His unwavering love, He provides for us all the graces we need to overcome all trials and adversities if we open our hearts to receive them by accepting each cross unconditionally. Magnify my faith in and love for You so that I can surrender to You all the situations in my life especially the adversities. In doing so, I glorify God and give Him solid proof of my trust in Him. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.