



# Links Players

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## Surviving The Heat

*Then King Nebuchadnezzar leaped to his feet in amazement and asked his advisers, 'Weren't there three men that we tied up and threw into the fire?' They replied, 'Certainly, Your Majesty.' He said, 'Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth looks like a son of the gods.'" (Daniel 3:24-25, NIV).*

Many people remember Ken Venturi for his role as a CBS golf commentator. His smooth voice and vast knowledge of the game provided great insights to viewers about what was happening on the golf course. However, Ken was also an excellent golfer, perhaps best known for what he went through to capture the U.S. Open in June 1964.

Playing a 36-hole finale at Congressional Country Club in Washington, D.C., Venturi started the day six strokes behind leader Tommy Jacobs. The story of the day was the heat, which was oppressive, reaching 100 degrees in the afternoon.

During the morning round, Venturi nearly collapsed on the 16th tee and was examined by a doctor after barely finishing the round. The question was not whether he could contend but whether he could even play the final 18 holes.

After a short rest and gulping down salt tablets, Venturi pronounced himself ready to play. Playing slowly with a doctor at his side, he caught and passed Jacobs on the front nine, eventually winning by four strokes with a final round 70. Venturi not only survived the heat, he claimed his first and only major in a classic example of perseverance.

In the third chapter of Daniel in the Old Testament, we see an extreme example of "surviving the heat." Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar built a giant golden image of himself and ordered everyone to bow and worship the statue whenever they heard music.

Daniel's friends Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused and were brought before the king. Despite being threatened with death in the king's furnace, they explained their refusal and their loyalty to God.

Nebuchadnezzar was outraged at their show of disrespect and decided to make an example of them. He ordered his furnace to be heated seven times hotter than its normal temperature and threw all three men into it. The fire was so hot that it killed the soldiers who had escorted them.

As Nebuchadnezzar looked into the furnace, he saw not just three but four men walking around, untouched and unharmed by the fire. Astonished at what he saw, the king called them out of the fire

and praised their God. And similar to what he had done with their friend Daniel, he promoted the three of them to roles of greater responsibility within his kingdom.

Many scholars believe the fourth person in the furnace was Jesus, while others say it was an angel sent by God. But whichever side of that debate you land on, the point is that God was with them and delivered them during their time of crisis.

We all have trials in life when we “feel the heat.” It may be a family issue, a health crisis, stress at work, or financial troubles. We can take heart in knowing that He is always with us no matter what we are facing. God not only has the answers, He is the answer.”

**Prayer: “Hear my prayer, Lord; listen to my cry for mercy. When I am in distress, I call to you because you answer me.” (Psalm 86:6-7)**

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John Bown

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