

Introduction

March 2007. Once again, I found myself celebrating the debilitating effects of Multiple Sclerosis. Yes, I said *celebrating*. To be more specific, I was having a colossal pity party.

“But God,” I said. “I have so much to do, and everything takes so much effort. Even the simplest of tasks are impossible. I don’t think I can take much more of this.” No one, not my family or friends could help me. I felt afraid and lonely, just wanting it all to end. My circum-stances overwhelmed me, and I was desperate to find peace. To put it bluntly, I was sick of being sick.

I opened my Bible to the book of Daniel, to the story of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who miraculously survived a literal fiery furnace. The more I studied, the more I considered my own *furnace*. God began speaking to my heart, revealing what He does in and through the flames of my own trials. Yes, I believe that all trials—yours and mine—serve as tools in God’s master plan for our lives. While I was unable to do much physically, God did plenty spiritually. He taught me how to be truly thankful for trials, rather than simply choosing to be happy in spite of them. I discovered it is possible to rejoice—yes, even get excited—about the toughest, most painful of trials.

Recently, I heard Beth Moore comment on writing Bible studies. She explained that she writes what she finds interesting as she studies God’s Word, hoping that others will find it interesting as well. That is exactly why I have written, *Joy in The Furnace*. Studying God’s Word excites me, and I simply cannot wait to share the truths He shared with me, praying they will benefit all—including you—who find themselves in their own fiery furnace.