

## New Hope on Monday 19

### Hope in the Fire

**Malachi 3:3 says: "He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver."** This is the story of the Jews who were not worshipping God as they were called to do. The extended version from the NCV reads: *Like someone who heats and purifies silver, he will purify the Levites and make them pure like gold and silver. Then they will bring offerings to the LORD in the right way.*

This verse puzzled some women in a Bible study and they wondered what this statement meant about the character and nature of God. One of the women offered to find out the process of refining silver and get back to the group at their next Bible Study.

That week, the woman called a silversmith and made an appointment to watch him at work. She didn't mention anything about the reason for her interest beyond her curiosity about the process of refining silver.

As she watched the silversmith, he held a piece of silver over the fire and let it heat up. He explained that in refining silver or gold, one needed to hold the silver in the middle of the fire where the flames were hottest as to burn away all the impurities.



The woman thought about God holding us in such a hot spot then she thought again about the verse that says: "He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver."

She asked the silversmith if it was true that he had to sit there in front of the fire the whole time the silver was being refined. The man answered that yes, he not only had to sit there holding the silver, but he had to keep his eyes on the silver the entire time it was in the fire. If the silver was left a moment too long in the flames, it would be destroyed.

The woman was silent for a moment. Then she asked the silversmith, "How do you know when the silver is fully refined?" He smiled at her and answered, "Oh, that's easy - when I see my image in it."

I know that some people who read this are 'doing it tough' as the saying goes. If today you are feeling the heat of the fire, whether caused by your own mistakes or the actions of others, remember that God has His eye on you and will keep watching you (and refining you) until He sees His image in you. God is a strong God and a loving God. He wants the best for you, even when the worst things seem to be happening. Trust Him with your life and with the lives of your loved ones. Put your hope in him. You'll never be disappointed.

Every blessing  
Sue