

LESSON PLAN

FIERY FURNACE

Daniel 3

Lesson Memory Verse: Daniel 3:17 - "If it be so, **our God whom we serve is able to deliver us** from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king." (Grades 1 & 2 memorize the portion in **bold**.)

Lesson Aim: God is able to save us from any danger and He will, if it is His will. We must trust Him.

Lesson Plan: Use the KEY – HE – SEE – WE – BE plan (explained in the Introductory Notes).

KEY (for Attention): Have you ever seen a house on fire? Did you see the fire and smoke coming out of the windows? It is frightening to see a fire burn a house, and even more frightening if you know someone is in the house. What is the first thing that firemen try to do when they arrive at a house that is on fire? (They try to get everyone out of the house and then they try to put out the fire.) Yes, they try to save people's lives before they try to save people's homes.

HE (for Authority): Just like the firemen, God wants to save our lives. Our lives are far more important than our homes, our clothes, our bicycles, our money, our toys or anything else that we may have. First, He wants to save our souls from the fires of Hell. Then He wants to save our bodies from being killed, unless it is time to take us home to Heaven. Our memory verse is the answer that three of God's men gave to King Nebuchadnezzar when they refused to bow before his idol, even though he furiously threatened to throw them in the fiery furnace if they would not do so. They told the king that God was **able** to save them and He **would** save them from being killed in his fiery furnace. They completely trusted God. In fact, in the next verse they said they would still trust God even if He let them die in the fiery furnace. If that happened they knew that God would take care of them, even in death. That is real faith in God. God is greatly pleased when we trust Him no matter what happens.

SEE (for Apperception) and WE (for Application): PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scriptures for this lesson. First let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word. In our Bible story today we will talk about three Hebrew young men who trusted God to save them from King Nebuchadnezzar when he tried to destroy them in his fiery furnace.

I. Dedication of the Golden Image (Daniel 3:1-7)

King Nebuchadnezzar made a golden image ninety feet high. No doubt the golden image was placed on a high base to reach this great height. It was lifted high so it could be seen at a great distance. The king set a special day for the dedication of this image and he commanded all of his leaders to be present on that day to worship it. It is assumed that this was an image of King Nebuchadnezzar and he demanded that all of his leaders worship him as their god. This was a wicked sin against God, who alone is to be worshiped. God had recently favored him with a special message in a dream about the future. Daniel had interpreted the dream for him. It was about an image and he was the head of gold on this image. Instead of being humble, when he learned that he was the head of gold, he became proud and made a gold image of himself. Then he threatened those who refused to worship his image that they would be thrown into a fiery furnace. This fiery furnace was nearby and could be seen by all of the worshipers. He forced his leaders to worship him. We can be sure that Satan put this wicked plan into Nebuchadnezzar's mind. It is like the plan that will be used to make people worship Antichrist during the coming Tribulation (Rev 13:14-15). Satan drives people to sin against God, if they will not do it willingly.

WE: We must not let Satan force us to sin against God. We need to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might (Eph 6:10). There is no other way that we can defeat Satan and his evil workers.

II. Disobedience of the Three Hebrew Men (Daniel 3:8-18)

Nebuchadnezzar made it clear to all of his leaders that when they heard the sound of an orchestra of instruments, they were to fall down and worship the image that he had set up. However, when Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego heard the sound of the instruments, they kept standing and refused to bow before the image. They knew that this was a sin against God. When King Nebuchadnezzar was told that these young Hebrew men did not bow before his image, he became very angry and ordered them to come before him. He gave them a second chance to bow down before the golden image when they heard the music, or they would be cast into the fiery furnace. Then he added these proud words, "Who is

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that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?” Even with this threat from the king, they remained true to God. They told the king that their God, whom they served, would deliver them from the fiery furnace and out of his hand, but even if He did not deliver them, they would not serve his gods or worship the golden image which he had set up. It took real courage and faith for these young men to speak so forcefully to this mighty king. They did not want to disobey the king, but they would rather disobey him than to disobey their God.

WE: We will face tests of our faithfulness to God. Maybe the tests will not threaten our lives, like it did when these three men were tested, but the tests will come to see if you will stand with God or fall down and sin against Him. Peter faced such a test and he fell down when he denied three times that he was a follower of Jesus. Will you stand with God or will you fall down and sin against Him? We must love God with all of our hearts to be able to stand with Him when the test comes. We must stand with God always, even if we have to disobey others to do it.

III. Deliverance from the Fiery Furnace (Daniel 3:19-27)

When Nebuchadnezzar heard what these three men said, he was filled with fury, so much so, that he commanded the furnace to be heated seven times more than ever before. Then he ordered his strongest soldiers to bind and cast them into the furnace. The furnace was so hot that it killed the mighty soldiers who threw Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego into it. When these three men fell into the furnace, the ropes that bound them were burned off, but not a thread of their clothes was burned. When the king saw them walking about in the fiery furnace, he was shocked. But he saw something else that he could hardly believe. He saw four men walking around and not three. Who was this fourth person? It was God's Son. This happened before He was born in Bethlehem. He had come to protect Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego from the fire because they had trusted God and had obeyed Him. Then Nebuchadnezzar called for these three men to come out of the fiery furnace. The king and all of his leaders, who had just bowed down to the golden image, had just seen the power of the true God. They saw that Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego had been delivered from the fiery furnace by their faithful God.

WE: We know the God that Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego served, still lives today. We need to trust God like they did so He can deliver us from the power of Satan and evil men. There is no one that is as powerful as our God. All power belongs to Him.

IV. Decree of the Mighty King (Daniel 3:28-30)

Nebuchadnezzar was a mighty king, but he learned that the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego was mightier than he was. He praised the God of these men, who was able to deliver them from his fiery furnace. As a result he made a decree (a law) that no one would ever say anything against the God of these three men. If someone did, he would be killed. Then the king promoted these three men to higher offices in his kingdom. Did it pay for them to stand up for God? Yes. God was praised and honored by the great Nebuchadnezzar along with his whole kingdom. Also, these three men were honored for their trust in God and obedience to Him.

WE: We will be honored by God when we trust and obey Him. He will take care of us when we are in danger and will reward us when the danger has passed. It always pays to trust God and obey Him.

BE (for Action): Review the story by asking the students some questions about the important parts of it to see if they remember it correctly. Then ask them to tell this story to someone else if they want to trust God like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. The telling of the story will fix it more firmly in their minds and hearts. Have them raise their hands if they will tell it to at least one person before next Sunday. Then check the following Sunday to see who actually did it.