

Three Boys in a Furnace

TEXT Daniel 3:1-30

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to relate how God spared the lives of the three Hebrew boys when they refused to pray to an idol. They will be able to apply this lesson to their own lives, recognizing that God will defend and deliver us if we do right.

MEMORY VERSE Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace. — Daniel 3:17

MEMORY VERSE SONG



Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us,
 Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us,
 from the burning fiery furnace he will deliver us.

MEMORY VERSE IN ACTION

OUR GOD — Point up, look up.
WHOM WE SERVE — Palms up, move hands alternately to and from the body.
IS ABLE — Make fists in front, palms down, move up and down from the wrist.
TO DELIVER — Move hands away from body in front of you with palms down (sharp motion).
US — Point around the room.
FROM THE BURNING FIERY FURNACE — Palms up, fingers curved, wiggle like flames.
HE WILL — Point up.
DELIVER — Move hands away from body in front of you with palms down (sharp motion).
US — Point around the room.

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

Cut apart into sections the fiery furnace. (See pattern at end of lesson.) Place each section on the board as the students learn that part of the verse.

BIBLE LESSON OUTLINE

Introduction: Bring to class some type of carved or brass statue or picture to represent an idol (Buddha). Ask your students if it would be right to pray to this. Explain that the lesson today tells about a time when three young men were commanded to pray to an image.

Progression of events:

1. King Nebuchadnezzar made an image and set it up on the plain of Dura.
2. He ordered all to come to the plain of Dura; and, at the sound of the music, to fall down and worship.
3. The three Hebrew boys refused to bow, though they faced a fiery furnace.
4. After being given another opportunity, they refused to bow, and were cast into the flames.

Climax: When the king looked in, he saw four men walking unharmed in the fire. The fourth One was the Son of God.

Conclusion: God will be with us in every situation if we are doing what we know to be right.

Response: The students will be able to relate situations in which God defends and delivers us, and will parallel this to the deliverance He gave the three Hebrew children from the fiery furnace.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

King Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace was not what the children today will think of when you speak of a furnace. Rather, it was more like a huge oven or kiln in which mud bricks were baked for use in the tremendous and numerous building projects in and around Babylon. Most of these kilns, or ovens, had both a top opening and a side opening and it was, no doubt, through the side opening that the king looked when he saw the men walking around unharmed through the fire.

To bow down to any idol, to recognize any but the one true God, is strictly forbidden to those who love the Lord. For an Israelite, idolatry was the most heinous of crimes and the greatest of sins. The relationship between God and His people is sometimes compared to the marriage relationship. To turn aside to other gods; or, in other words, to put anything above or ahead of God in our life is to commit spiritual adultery. The three Hebrew children were not about to be guilty of this and knew if they stood true to God, He would deliver them.

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

Pass out copies of the picture of three boys in a furnace entitled "Standing the Heat" (see Patterns). Help your class fill in the spaces provided under the headings: "Sometimes I am tempted to do these things:" and "When I am tempted to do wrong I can . . ."

Shadow-box furnace — Use plastic or yellow cellophane over inside of box colored red. Draw three Hebrew children and "Son of Man" on ice cream-cup spoons. Stick into slots on bottom of box.

Have two teams with each child being named for one of the characters in the lesson, one name given to a child on each team. As the story is told, the children stand when their Bible name is mentioned or called. The first person to stand for his name gets a point for his team. The team with the highest score wins.

True or false questions:

1. There is one God.
2. They were told to bow two times.
3. There were three boys in the furnace.
4. Four people were seen in the furnace.
5. Five different groups of people looked to see if they were burned.
6. Six different kinds of instruments were played.
7. The furnace was heated seven times hotter for them.

QUESTIONS

Why did King Nebuchadnezzar call the people together?

What was the signal for the people to bow down?

What did the king demand the people to do when the music sounded?

What was the punishment for not obeying?

Did Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego worship the image? Why or why not?

How did Nebuchadnezzar act when they wouldn't bow down?

What happened to the men who threw them into the furnace?

How many men were walking around in the furnace?

Who was the fourth Man and why was He there?

How did they look when they came out of the furnace?

How did the king feel about God and the three Hebrew children after this happened?

Name some situations in which God will deliver us.

Tell some ways that God can keep you today.

PRE-SCHOOL SUGGESTIONS

Five doll figures representing the three boys, the king, and Jesus, can be made from cardboard tubes. A parchment paper roll can be put together with toy rolling pins. Read the law saying everyone must bow down. Accordion-cut a row of figures for each child to hold and make them bow down when they hear the music (harmonica fanfare). Have a cardboard furnace with orange paper flames and a larger flame in front for "seven times hotter."

REVIEW IDEAS

Have two teams. For each team make a statue out of at least 12 pieces of construction paper. Ask questions of the teams. You should have 24 questions — 12 for each team and a couple of bonus ones. If the question is answered correctly they get to take off a piece of the statue, starting at the top. The first team to completely destroy their statue wins.

Being Tested — Tell how the Hebrew boys were tested just like we are tested, but God is able to deliver. Use a strip of lead solder and a piece of wire that looks similar to make your point. Light a match to the piece of solder and see how it melts. Hold the piece of wire in a pair of pliers and apply the same fire to the wire. It doesn't melt, but stands the test. When God wants to use us for some important task He often puts us through a heat test to see how we stand up under it. Sometimes it's not very much fun to be tested, but if we prove true and continue to love and obey God, He will bring us through and He can use us to fulfill the tasks He wants us to do for Him.

COORDINATING SONGS

“Stand Up and Shout It” with actions (standing and sitting)
“Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego” in Salvation Songs for Children #4
“Dare To Be a Daniel”

Fiery Furnace — Visual Graph, Scripture Press
King Nebuchadnezzar’s Golden Statue — Lion Story Book, Lion Publishing
Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego — Magic Picture Book, David C. Cook
Three Men in a Furnace — Pop-Up Book, Regal Books of Gospel Light Publications

SUPPORT MATERIAL

Three Men Who Walked in Fire — Arch Book, Concordia

NOTES

Lined area for notes with 20 horizontal lines.

