



Lesson 7

Men Who Dare to Obey God

Daniel 3

Memory Verse

“Finally, my brethren,
be strong in the Lord and
in the power of His might”
(Ephesians 6:10)

Teacher's Objective

At the end of the session,
the students should
be able to:

Define what an idol is

Locate on a map
the Dura Valley

Describe how three men
obeyed and pleased God
rather than men

Express in their own
words how they will be
determined to obey God

Materials Needed

See “Teaching Activities”
for specific activities

Teacher's Bible Study

King Nebuchadnezzar and his army destroyed Jerusalem, and the people of Judah were their captives. As we have already learned, Daniel and his three friends, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, were sent to Babylon to be trained to serve in the ways of the Babylonian civil service. The events in Daniel 3 probably occurred while Daniel was away from the capital city of Babylon.

According to the Septuagint these events in Daniel 3 occurred in the 18th year of King Nebuchadnezzar's reign (587 B.C.). Daniel and his three friends had been in Babylon about 20 years.

The fiery furnace used by King Nebuchadnezzar was more like a giant oven than what we call a kiln. During this period in history, a furnace such as this was used to bake bricks. The bricks were then used for building. The ovens had both a top opening and a side opening.

It is not known for sure where the Plain or Valley of Dura was. However, in 1863 a French archeologist, Jules Oppert, discovered a pedestal made of brick some six miles southeast of Babylon. It is believed to be the base for the golden image. In Mesopotamia, Dura was a common name which meant “the wall.” This may refer to the walls built around cities to protect them or the mountains around the valley.

Today's story is an example of courage being rewarded. These young men showed a true conviction for what they believed in. They were determined to obey God and please Him. King Nebuchadnezzar must have not only been impressed that the three were saved from the fiery furnace, but that they were willing to lose their lives rather than worship an idol.

God cared so much for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego that when they walked out of the furnace:

The fire had not burned their bodies.
Their hair was not singed.
Their clothing was not affected.
They did not even have the smell of fire on them.

In preparation for this week's lesson, read Psalm 19, Psalm 27, Psalm 37, and Psalm 32.

Presenting the Bible Story

Daniel 3:1

When was the last time you stood by a campfire? What did your clothing and hair smell like afterwards? In today's story, three men were thrown into a furnace. Not only did they come out of the furnace alive, but they did not even smell like fire.

Daniel 3:2,3

The statue stood 90 feet high and 9 feet wide. (Teacher: Try to find something in your city that is comparable in height.) An idol is an image that is worshiped. In this case, the idol was made of gold.

Daniel 3:4-7

Eight classes of officials were summoned to the dedication of the image. *Satrap*s were chief representatives of the king. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego were in a position of authority as well (Daniel 2:49). It must have been quite a sight to see so many important officials stand before the golden image and worship it.

Daniel 3:8-12

When all these officials fell down before the golden image, their actions recognized Nebuchadnezzar as the absolute authority politically and religiously. These officials were representing the people they ruled; therefore, their act of submission included them as well. Sudden death in a fiery furnace was the penalty if you did not comply with the command to bow and worship the image. Awestruck by the idol, music, and the king's command, the officials did as they were told.

Daniel 3:13-15

Not everyone bowed down to the image. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego were three Jewish men who did not. They knew the one true God, and they worshiped Him alone (Exodus 20:4,5; Matthew 4:10). The accusers of these three men were probably jealous. It was not normal for Jewish captives to be in positions of authority.

Daniel 3:16-18

At first, the king gives the three young men a way out by asking, if it was true that they would not serve his gods. Yes, it was true, they were not going to bow down to the image. The king then boasts, "Who is the god who will deliver you from my hands?" This is now a conflict between Nebuchadnezzar and the one true God.

Daniel 3:19-23

Here is a tremendous act of faith on the part of these three men. They obeyed God despite the foreseeable consequences. Obeying God was more important than life to these three. They may work for Nebuchadnezzar, but they worship God.

Daniel 3:24-27

With a tremendous amount of anger, Nebuchadnezzar ordered the furnace to be heated seven times hotter than usual. He was going to make an example out of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. The men were bound and thrown in. The heat was so intense that the soldiers who threw them in were killed by the flames.

Daniel 3:28-30

When the king looked into the furnace, he was amazed to see four men walking around in the fire. Remember, there were only three and they were bound; now there are four and they are walking around. When Nebuchadnezzar called the three out of the furnace, he acknowledged their God as the "Most High God."

Because of the courage of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, the king declared that everyone should honor the true God.

God delivered His servants who trusted in Him. These are encouraging words for us today. Do not compromise your religious beliefs when you are under great pressure to do so.

Art and Activities

Teaching Activities

Young Children

Provide copies of Activity Page suitable for each of your students.

Older Children

Provide copies of Activity Page suitable for each of your students.

**Explore with your students
the following questions :**

Explore the Subject

1. Was it easy or difficult for the three men to obey God?
2. Have you ever been challenged about your beliefs?
3. When is it easy to obey and please God and when is it difficult?
4. Why did these three young men obey God?

**Always close your
class with prayer**

Respond and Reinforce

1. On a piece of paper, write down some rules that everyone in your family follows. Then answer the question, *Why do we have rules?*
2. Did Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego know God's rules?
3. Did the three men have the courage to obey those rules?
4. Discuss memory verse.

Activity Page

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Find the words below hidden in the puzzle.
They are hidden up, down, across, backwards and diagonally.



ABEDNEGO

BIND

CAPTAINS

CORNET

DULCIMER

DURA

FIERY

FLUTE

FOUR

FURNACE

FURY

GOLD

GOVERNORS

HARP

HEAT

IMAGE

JEW

KING

MESHACH

MUSIC

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

PRINCES

PSALTERY

RAGE

RULERS

SACKBUT

SHADRACH

SHERIFFS

SINGED

SLEW

SMELL

WORSHIP

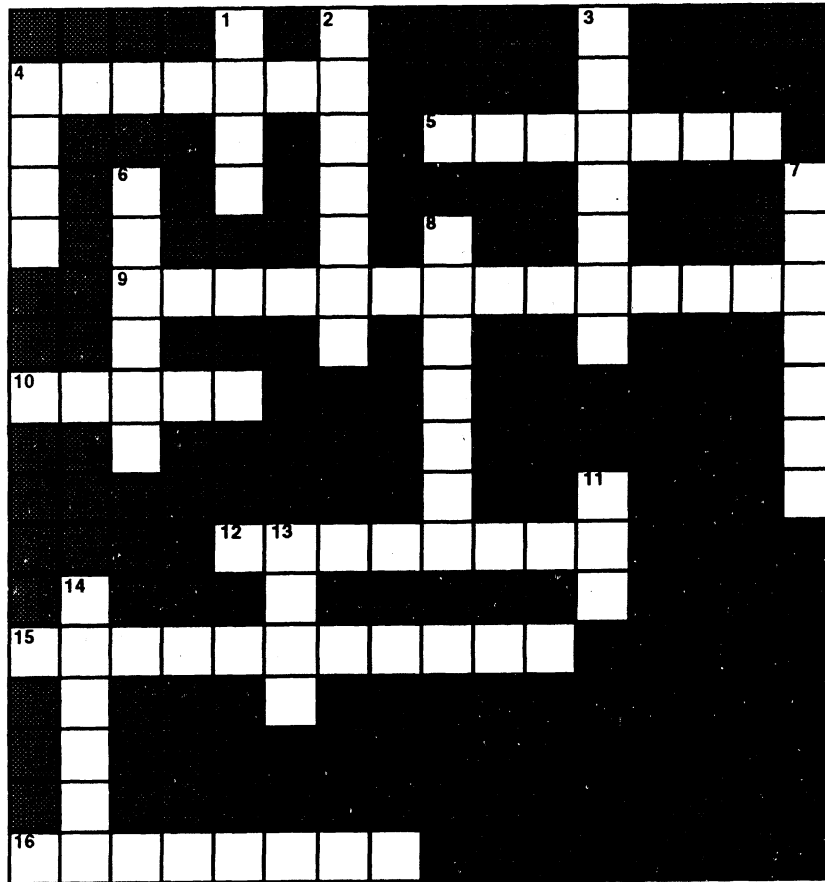
BABYLON

Activity Page

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Daniel

Complete the crossword puzzle below.



Across:

4. A chamber of intense heat.
5. Full of rage; violent passion.
9. King of Babylon
10. To percieve odor or inhale through the nose.
12. His Hebrew name was Azariah
(see Daniel 1:7).
15. The people were instructed to worship the
_____ (two words).
16. His Hebrew name was Hananiah.

Down:

1. Feeling of intense anger.
2. His Hebrew name was Mishael.
3. Persons who are preeminent in class or group.
4. A state or process of combustion.
6. Scorched, superficially burned.
7. Adoring reverence or regard.
8. The chief city of ancient Mesopotamia.
11. To bend the knee, back, or incline the head as
in submission, or reverence; to bend downward.
13. To fasten or secure tightly to prevent release.
14. Follows third position.

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The three young men obeyed God's rules.

Make a list of some of the rules that you are asked to follow at home, school, and church.

Then write why you think these rules are in place.

Home

School

Church
