

Lesson 24: THE FIERY FURNACE
Daniel 3

INTRODUCTION:

The kingdom of Judah had been conquered by Babylon, and many of the people had been captured and carried away. Four young Jews who had been given special honors in the court of King Nebuchadnezzar were Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. These four men served in the King's court, and yet above all, they were always faithful to their God, Jehovah. Today we read a familiar story in which the faith of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego were put to the test.

READING:

Now read aloud or have the children take turns reading from **Daniel 3**.

DISCUSSION:

What did Nebuchadnezzar set up?
(A large golden image.)

What command did he give?
(That when the music sounded, all people must bow down and worship the image.)

What was to be the punishment of anyone who disobeyed?
(They were to be thrown into the fiery furnace.)

Who disobeyed this command?
(Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego)

When the king confronted them, how did they answer?
(They said that their God was able to rescue them from the fiery furnace, but that even if He didn't, they would worship Him only, and never the images of King Nebuchadnezzar.)

In his rage, what more did the king command?
(That the furnace be heated seven times hotter than usual.)

As a result, what happened to the king's own men?
(They were killed by the fire as they threw Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego in.)

And then what did Nebuchadnezzar see in the flames?
(That Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego were no longer tied up, but walking, and that a fourth man was with them, who looked like "the Son of God" or an angel. This angel was a sign of the Lord's care and protection.)

When the three men came out of the fire, what was the king's new command?
(He blessed the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, and said that whoever spoke against their God would be cut into pieces!)

Lesson 24 – Oak Arbor New Church Sunday School, page 2

Had Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego made a big show of how good and faithful they were being?

(No. They simply made it clear that they would not go against what they believed, no matter what anyone threatened.)

Were they willing to follow and worship God only if it brought them a pleasant life?

(No. They trusted and believed in God so much that they were willing to face the pain of the fire, and even death. They believed that no matter what happened to them, God would be with them. And this was absolutely true. If they had died in the fire, they would have been taken into heaven.)

Trusting in the Lord and sticking to what you believe to be right is not always easy. Sometimes it might look like it brings only trouble. Those watching Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego must have thought they were crazy, to face such dire punishment when it would have been so easy just to worship the image and avoid it all. But these men believed that commitment to the God whom they served – the God whom they believed governed and provided all things – was more important than being frightened or bullied into betraying that God.

If we, like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, always try to remain faithful to the Lord and His teachings, then we can be held in His hands, and no matter what happens, no matter what troubles come along, He can be with us, and will bring us through it all right.

PROJECT: Wax Resist Picture

Depending on your group, you could have them work on this while you ask the questions and have the discussion, or have them work on it afterwards.

Supplies:

- White crayons
- Many other crayons of various colors
- Large sheets of white paper
- Trays of watercolor paints

Procedure:

Have the children make a crayon drawing of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, and then draw an angel with white crayon.

Next, have them paint red, orange, and yellow flames all over the picture with the watercolor paints. The white angel will “appear,” and the crayon figures of the angel and the three men will “resist” the painted flames just as the Lord made these three men able to “resist” the real flames of the fiery furnace.