

Three Men in the Fiery Furnace

Daniel 3

The Story

Parents: Review this lesson with your child.

What safety rules do you know about fire? What do things look like when they've been in a fire? Today we will hear about three men who were protected by God in a fiery furnace.

While King Nebuchadnezzar was still ruling over the people of Israel, he decided to have a very large idol built. It was very and covered with gold. All of the people in the land were told to bow down and pray to the statue when they heard music. The king decided that anyone who did not bow down and pray would be thrown into a fiery furnace. There were three men who believed in the true God and knew it would be a sin to bow and pray to the idol.

One day the sound of music was heard, but Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego did not bow down. Some of the king's men saw this and told the king.

Nebuchadnezzar asked that the three men be brought to him. He gave the men one more chance to bow to the statue or they would be killed in the furnace.

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were not afraid of the king's words, and said to him, "O king, our God is able to save us from being killed in your fiery furnace. If our God wants to save us, we will not die in the fire. But even if the Lord wants us to die that way, we will never bow down to your idol of gold."

This angered the king, who made the fire seven times hotter than before, and ordered the three men to be tied and thrown into the furnace. It was so hot that the guards died. To the king's surprise, the three men did not die. In fact, when he looked into the

furnace, he saw 4 men. The fourth man was an angel of the Lord.

Nebuchadnezzar said, "Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?"

So he ordered that the three men be brought out of the furnace. He was surprised to see that not one hair had been burnt, and their clothes didn't even smell like smoke. When Nebuchadnezzar saw this he said that there was no other god that could have saved the three men but the true God. Then he made Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego leaders in his country.

The three men believed in the one, true God.

We believe in the one, true God.

Passage

Matthew 4:10 - You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.

Hymn & Prayer - TLH #252 v. 1

We all believe in one true God,
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
Ever-present Help in need,
Praised by all the heav'nly host,
By whose mighty pow'r alone
All is made and wrought and done.



Classroom Activity - Picture Review

- Read the sentences aloud to the children. Have them draw lines to match the sentence with the picture answer.

1. Who was King Nebuchadnezzar? ●



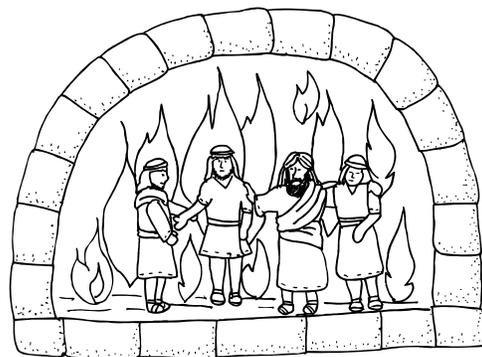
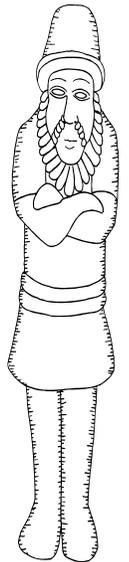
2. What did he make of gold? ●



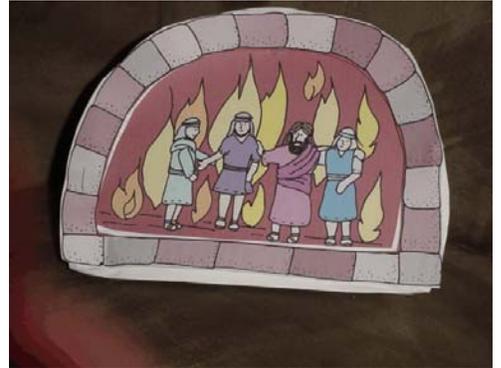
3. Who would not bow down? ●

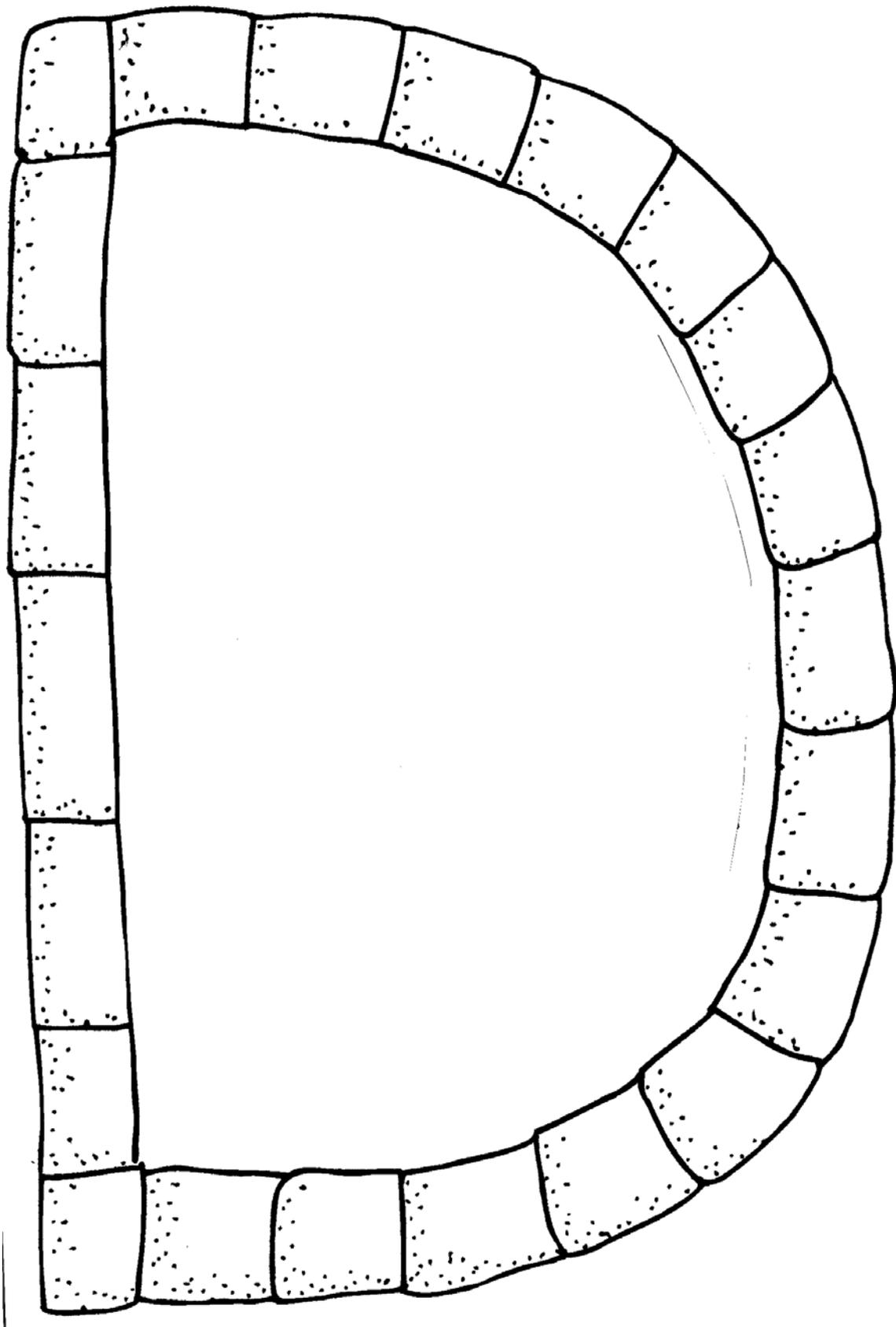
4. Where were they thrown? ●

5. Who was with them in the fire? ●



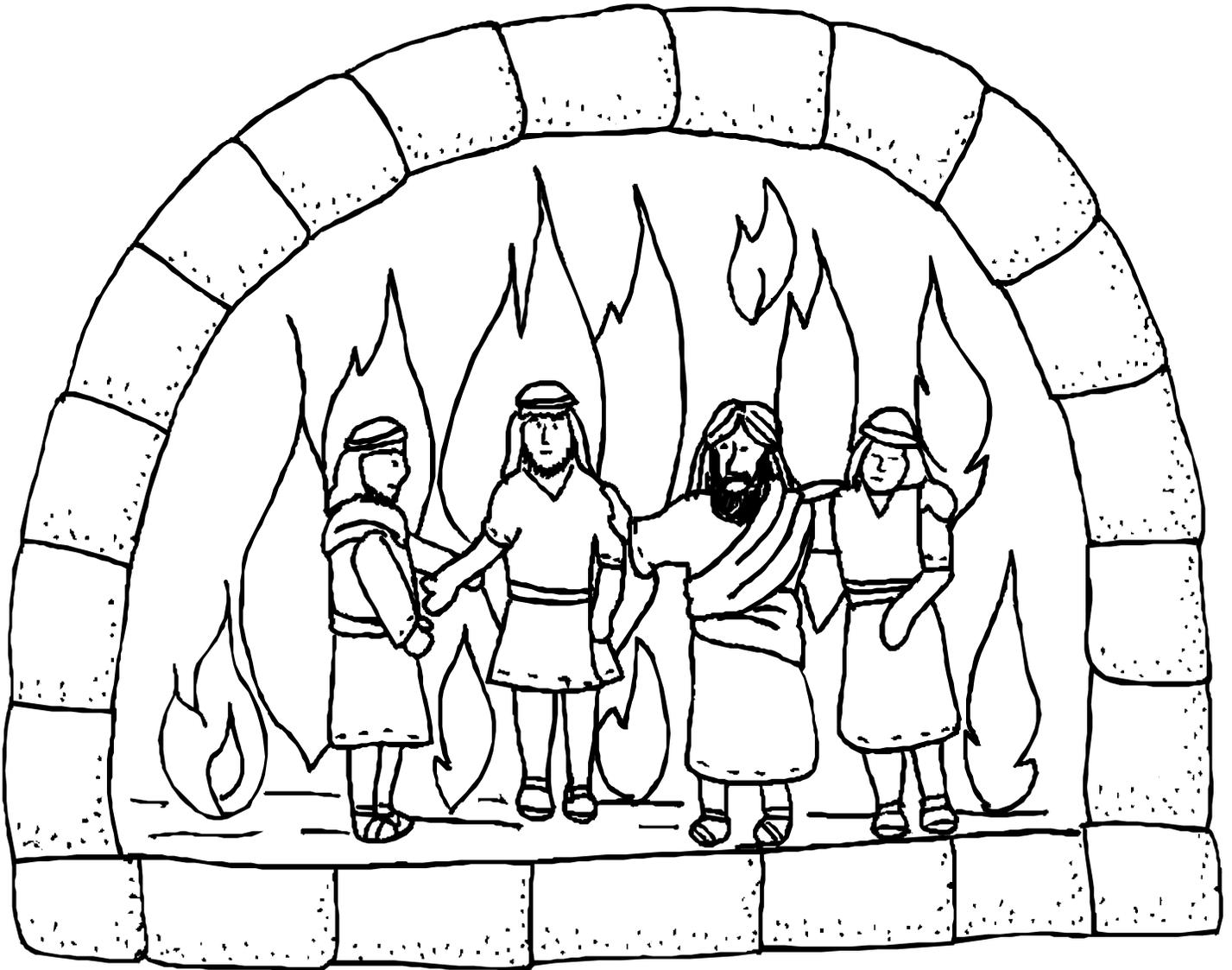
Classroom Art Activity - Fiery Furnace Plate - Each child will need a paper plate, furnace outline, men in fire and glue stick. Fold back about 2" of the paper plate. It should stand up by itself. Color, cut out and glue the figures to the plate as shown. Color, cut out and glue the furnace to the outer edge as shown.





Three Men in the Fiery Furnace

Daniel 3



Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego confessed their faith in the one true God even though it meant possible death.



The Story

What safety rules do you know about fire? What do things look like when they've been in a fire? Today we will hear about three men who were protected by God in a fiery furnace.

While King Nebuchadnezzar was still ruling over the people of Israel, he decided to have a very large idol built. It was about 90 feet tall, nine feet wide, and covered with gold. All of the people in the land of Babylon were told to bow down and pray to the statue when they heard the sounds of different kinds of instruments. He decided that anyone who did not bow down and pray would be thrown into a fiery furnace. There were three men who been taken from Israel to serve Nebuchadnezzar named Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. They believed in the true God and knew it would be a sin to bow and pray to the idol.

One day the sound of music was heard, but Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego did not bow down. Some of the king's men saw this and said to the king, "O king, there are three men from Israel who have not obeyed you. They did not worship your idol of gold."

Nebuchadnezzar asked that the three men be brought to him. He gave the men one more chance, but promised that if they didn't bow to the statue, they would be killed in the furnace. He even made fun of the fact that there would be no god who could ever save them from the fire.

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were not afraid of the king's words, and said to him, "O king, our God is able to save us from being killed in your fiery furnace. If our God wants to save us, we will not die in the fire. But even if the Lord wants us to die that way, we will never bow down to your idol of gold."

This angered the king, who made the fire seven times hotter than before, and ordered the three men to be tied and thrown into the furnace. It was so hot that the guards ordered to throw the men into the furnace died, but to the king's surprise, the three men did not die. In fact, when he looked into the furnace, he saw 4 men. The fourth man was an angel of the Lord.

Nebuchadnezzar said to the men with him, "Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?"

They answered and said to the king, "True, O king."

So he ordered that the three men be brought out of the furnace. He was surprised to see that not one hair had been burnt, and their clothes didn't even smell like smoke. When Nebuchadnezzar saw this, he said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who sent His Angel and delivered His servants who trusted in Him."

He saw that there was no other god that could have saved the three men but the true God. Then he made Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego leaders in his country.

God wants us to confess and share our faith in the one true Savior, Jesus Christ.

Activity One - Answer these questions about the story.

1. What did King Nebuchadnezzar insist that all his people do?

2. Who refused to do this?
3. What was the punishment if they disobeyed?
4. Why would it have been wrong for the men to follow the king's order?
5. Whom did God send to protect these men?
6. If someone asks you to do something against God's Word, who should you follow, God or man?

Activity Two - Follow the directions for this art activity.

Materials:

- ▶ shoe boxes for the class
- ▶ various colors of construction paper or magazines
- ▶ drawing paper or the figures on the next page

Instructions for students:

1. Cut out pieces of red, orange, and yellow from construction pieces or out of magazine pieces that have these colors.
2. Glue the collage of flames on the inside of the box.
3. Draw five people or use the pictures on the next page, cut them out, and glue the three men and the angel in the box and place King Nebucadnezzar outside the flames. Show that God did not allow the fire to hurt them or their clothes in any way.



Passages

Matthew 4:10 - You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.

Psalm 46:1 - God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Hymn - TLH #447 v. 1

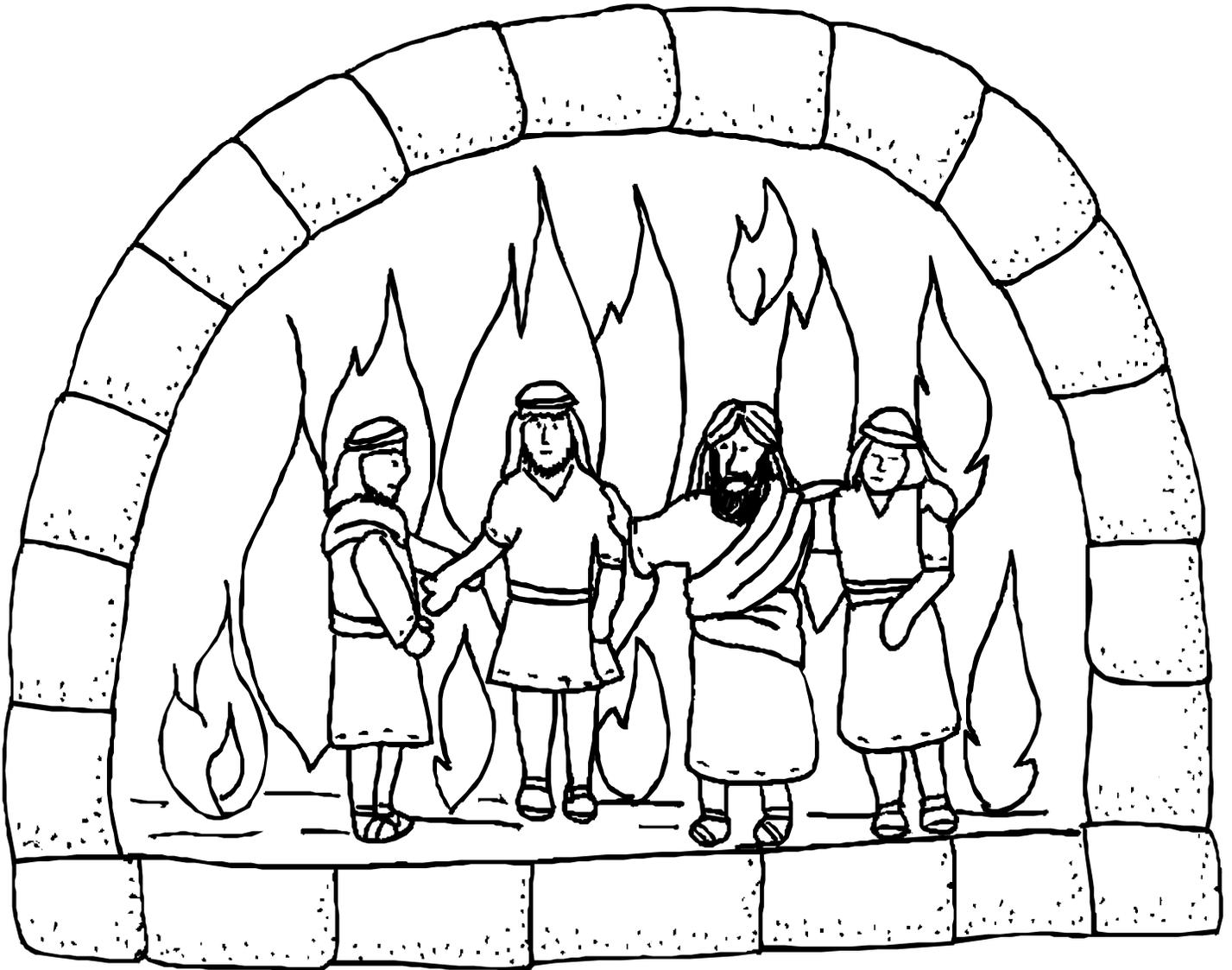
Fight the good fight with all thy might;
Christ is thy Strength and Christ thy Right.
Lay hold on life, and it shall be
Thy joy and crown eternally.

Prayer

Lord God,
We know that we are often afraid of the world and our enemies. Thank You for sending Your Son to fight and win the battle against the devil, the world, and our sinful nature. We look forward to the day when we will join You in the glory of heaven. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Three Men in the Fiery Furnace

Daniel 3



Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego confessed their faith in the one true God even though it meant possible death.



The Story

What safety rules do you know about fire? What do things look like when they've been in a fire? Today we will hear about three men who were put in a fiery furnace but were protected by God.

While King Nebuchadnezzar was still ruling over the people of Israel, he decided to have a very large idol built. It was about 90 feet tall, nine feet wide, and covered with gold. All of the people in the land of Babylon were told to bow down and pray to the statue when they heard the sounds of different kinds of instruments. Nebuchadnezzar decided that anyone who did not bow down and pray, would be thrown into a fiery furnace. There were three men who had been taken from Israel to serve Nebuchadnezzar. They were named Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. They believed in the true God and knew it would be a sin to bow and pray to the idol.

One day the sound of music was heard, but Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego did not bow down. Some of the king's men saw this and said to the king, "O king, there are three men from Israel who have not obeyed you. They did not worship your idol of gold."

Nebuchadnezzar asked that the three men be brought to him. He gave the men one more chance, but promised that if they didn't bow to the statue, they would be killed in the furnace of fire. He even made fun of the fact that there would be no god who could ever save them from the fire.

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were not afraid of the king's words. They said to him, "O king, our God is able to save us from being killed in your fiery furnace. If our God wants to save us, we will not die in the fire. But even if the Lord wants us to die that way, we will never bow down to your idol of gold."

This angered the king. He made the fire seven times hotter than before, and ordered the three men to be tied and thrown into the furnace. It was so hot that the guards who were ordered to throw the men into the furnace died. To the king's surprise, the three men did not die. In fact, when he looked into the furnace, he saw four men. The fourth man was the angel of the Lord.

Nebuchadnezzar said to the men with him, "Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?"

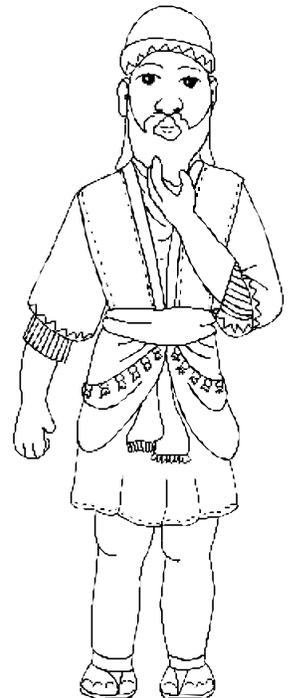
They answered and said to the king, "True, O king."

So he ordered that the three men be brought out of the furnace. He was surprised to see that not one hair had been burnt, and their clothes didn't even smell like smoke. When Nebuchadnezzar saw this, he said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who sent His Angel and delivered His servants who trusted in Him."

He saw that there was no other god that could have saved the three men but the true God. Then he made Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego leaders in his country.

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2. Who refused to do this?
3. What was the punishment if someone disobeyed?
4. When given a second chance, what answer did the three men give?
5. As a response, what order did the king give about the fire in the furnace?
6. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were confident that God could deliver them, and that He would do so if it was His will. What were they willing to do in case God decided not to deliver them?
7. Whom did God send to deliver the three men?
8. If God allows struggles to come our way, does it mean that He does not love us? Why?
9. What do troubles help us remember?
10. Will God ever send us more struggle than we can bear?
11. Whom does God send to deliver us from the struggles in this world?
12. Whom did God send to win the battle against sin, death, and the devil? How was this battle won?



Activity Two - Follow the directions for this art activity.

Materials:

- ▶ shoe box for each child in the class
- ▶ various colors of construction paper or magazines
- ▶ King Nebuchadnezzar on this page and the three men and the angel on the next page (*enlarge these if you wish*)

Instructions for students:

1. Cut out pieces of red, orange and yellow (in the shape of flames) from the construction paper or out of magazine pieces that have these colors.
2. Glue the collage of flames on the inside of the box.
3. Cut out the five people and glue the three men and the angel into the box. Place King Nebuchadnezzar outside the flames. Show that God did not allow the fire to hurt them or their clothes in any way.



Activity Three - Match the numbers with the letters to find the Bible passage that is a great comfort to us.

A = 1	D = 3	F = 5	H = 7	L = 9	O = 11	R = 13	T = 15	V = 17
B = 2	E = 4	G = 6	I = 8	N = 10	P = 12	S = 14	U = 16	Y = 18

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Passages

Matthew 4:10 - You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.

Psalms 46:1 - God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Hymn - TLH #447 v. 1, 3

Fight the good fight with all thy might;
Christ is thy Strength and Christ thy Right.
Lay hold on life, and it shall be
Thy joy and crown eternally.

Cast care aside; upon thy Guide
Lean, and His mercy will provide;
Lean, and the trusting soul shall prove
Christ is its Life and Christ its Love.

Prayer

Lord God,
We know that we are often afraid of the world and our enemies. Thank You for sending Your Son to fight and win the battle against the devil, the world, and our sinful nature. We look forward to the day when we will join You in the glory of heaven. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Three Men in the Fiery Furnace

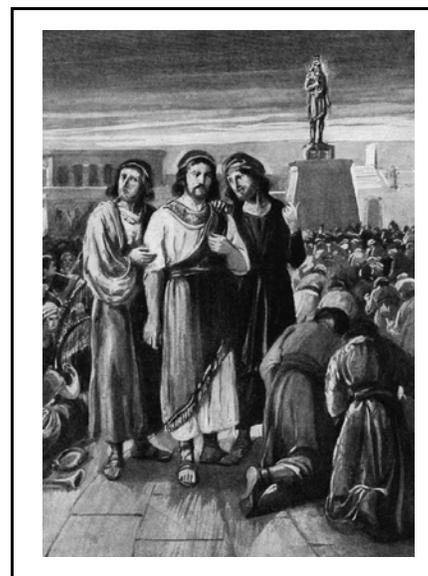
Daniel 3

Would you be willing to defend your beliefs? Are you willing to die defending them?

Today's lesson shows us the faith of three men who showed by their actions that they would not go along with the crowd and worship an idol.

Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, be present now,
Our hearts in true devotion bow,
Thy Spirit send with grace divine,
And let Thy truth within us shine. Amen



The Story - Daniel 3 (paraphrased)

Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, made an image of gold, whose height was 90 feet and its width 9 feet. He then sent word to gather together all the important rulers and officials of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which the king had set up. So all the officials of the provinces gathered together for the dedication.

Then a herald cried aloud, "To you it is commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, that at the time you hear the sound of the music which the instruments play, you shall fall down and worship the gold image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. Whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace."

So at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the music, they worshiped the gold image.

At that time certain Chaldeans came forward and accused the Jews. They spoke and said to King Nebuchadnezzar, "O king, live

forever! You, O king, have made a decree that everyone who hears the sound of the music shall fall down and worship the gold image. There are certain Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego; these men, O king, have not paid due regard to you. They do not serve your gods or worship the gold image which you have set up."

Then Nebuchadnezzar, in rage and fury, gave the command to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. So they brought these men before the king. Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying to them, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the gold image which I have set up? Now if you fall down and worship the image which I have made, good! But if you do not worship, you shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. And who is the god who will deliver you from my hands?"

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego



answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up."

Then Nebuchadnezzar was full of fury, and the expression on his face changed toward Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. He spoke and commanded that they heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated. He commanded certain mighty men of valor who were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, and cast them into the burning fiery furnace. Then these men were bound in their coats, their trousers, their turbans, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Therefore, because the king's command was urgent, and the furnace exceedingly hot, the flame of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. These three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and he rose in haste and spoke, saying to his counselors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?"

They answered and said to the king, "True, O king."

"Look!" he answered, "I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

Then Nebuchadnezzar went near the mouth of the burning fiery furnace and spoke, saying, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, servants of the Most High God, come out, and come here."

Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego came from the midst of the fire. And the satraps, administrators, governors, and the king's counselors gathered together, and they saw these men on whose bodies the fire had no power; the hair of their head was not singed nor were their garments affected, and the smell of fire was not on them.

Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, who sent His Angel and delivered His servants who trusted in Him, and they have frustrated the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they should not serve nor worship any god except their own God! Therefore I make a decree that any people, nation, or language which speaks anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made an ash heap; because there is no other God who can deliver like this."

Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego in the province of Babylon.

Outer Aim - Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego confessed their faith in the one true God even though it meant possible death.

What the Story Tells Us - Answer these discussion questions together.

1. What did King Nebuchadnezzar insist that all his people do?
2. Who refused to do this?
3. What was the punishment if they disobeyed?
4. When given a second chance, what was their answer?
5. As a response, what order did the king give to do to the furnace?

6. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego were confident that God could deliver them and that He would do so if it was His will. What were they willing to do in case God decided not to deliver them?
7. Whom did God send to deliver the three men?
8. If God allows struggles to come our way, does it mean that He does not love us? Why? What do they help us remember?
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Passages

Matthew 4:10 - 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.'

1 Corinthians 10:13 - God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape.

Hymn - TLH #447

Fight the good fight with all thy might;
Christ is thy Strength and Christ thy Right.
Lay hold on life, and it shall be
Thy joy and crown eternally.

Cast care aside; upon thy Guide
Lean, and His mercy will provide;
Lean, and the trusting soul shall prove
Christ is its Life and Christ its Love.

Run the straight race thro' God's good grace;
Lift up thine eyes and seek His face.
Life with its way before us lies;
Christ is the Path and Christ the Prize.

Faint not nor fear, His arms are near;
He changeth not, and thou art dear.
Only believe, and thou shalt see
That Christ is All in all to thee. Amen

Prayer

Dear Lord God,

We know that we are often afraid of the world. We are tempted and asked to do many things that are contrary to Your Word. It fills us with doubt in Your power. For this forgive us and help us to have no fear of enemies. Thank You for sending Your Son to fight and win the battle against the devil, the world, and our sinful nature. We could not fight that battle on our own. Give us the understanding that You will never tempt us more than we are able. And finally, may Your will be done as You see fit. We look forward to the day when we will join You in the glory of heaven. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Three Men in the Fiery Furnace

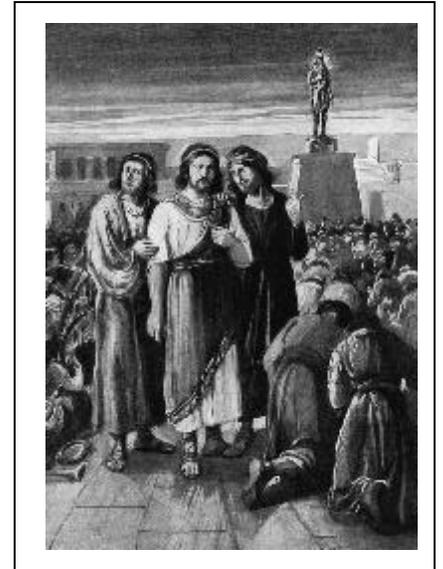
Daniel 3

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Prayer

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Our hearts in true devotion bow,
Thy Spirit send with grace divine,
And let Thy truth within us shine. Amen



The Story - Daniel 3 (paraphrased)

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Then a herald cried aloud, "To you it is commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, that at the time you hear the sound of the music which the instruments play, you shall fall down and worship the gold image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. Whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace."

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Then Nebuchadnezzar, in rage and fury, gave the command to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. So they brought



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Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed- Nego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up."

Then Nebuchadnezzar was full of fury, and the expression on his face changed toward Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. He spoke and commanded that they heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated. He commanded certain mighty men of valor who were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, and cast them into the burning fiery furnace. Then these men were bound in their coats, their trousers, their turbans, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Therefore, because the king's command was urgent, and the furnace exceedingly hot, the flame of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. These three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

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Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, who sent His Angel and delivered His servants who trusted in Him, and they have frustrated the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they should not serve nor worship any god except their own God! Therefore I make a decree that any people, nation, or language which speaks anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed- Nego shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made an ash heap; because there is no other God who can deliver like this."

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2. Who refused to do this?
3. What was the punishment if they disobeyed?
4. When given a second chance, what was their answer?
5. As a response, what order did the king give to do to the furnace?
6. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were confident that God could deliver them and that He would do so if it was His will. What were they willing to do in case God decided not to deliver them?
7. Whom did God send to deliver the three men?
8. If God allows struggles to come our way, does it mean that He does not love us? Why? What do they help us remember?
9. Will God ever send us more struggle than we can bear?
10. Whom does God send to deliver us from the struggles in this world?
11. Whom did God send to win the battle against sin, death, and the devil? How did he do this?

What God's Word Tells Us - Look up the passages in the first column. In the spaces provided, tell how they apply to the story, then how they apply to our lives.

Passage	Application to the STORY	Application to YOU
Hebrews 1:14		

Passage	Application to the STORY	Application to YOU
Matthew 10:32b		
Isaiah 43:1-3		
Psalm 118:1-9		

Inner Aim - God wants us to confess and share our faith in the one true Savior, Jesus Christ.

Passages

Matthew 4:10 - You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.

1 Corinthians 10:13 - God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape.

Hymn - TLH #447

Fight the good fight with all thy might;
Christ is thy Strength and Christ thy Right.
Lay hold on life, and it shall be
Thy joy and crown eternally.

Cast care aside; upon thy Guide
Lean, and His mercy will provide;
Lean, and the trusting soul shall prove
Christ is its Life and Christ its Love.

Run the straight race thro' God's good grace;
Lift up thine eyes and seek His face.
Life with its way before us lies;
Christ is the Path and Christ the Prize.

Faint not nor fear, His arms are near;
He changeth not, and thou art dear.
Only believe, and thou shalt see
That Christ is All in all to thee. Amen

Prayer

Dear Lord God,

We know that we are often afraid of the world. We are tempted and asked to do many things that are contrary to Your Word. It fills us with doubt in Your power. For this forgive us and help us to have no fear of enemies. Thank You for sending Your Son to fight and win the battle against the devil, the world, and our sinful nature. That battle that we could not fight on our own. Give us the understanding that You will never tempt us more than we are able. And finally, may Your will be done as You see fit. We look forward to the day when we will join You in the glory of heaven. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

STORY

The Three Men in the Fiery Furnace - (Daniel 3)

TEACHER PRAYER

Lord Jesus, grant me grace to bear whatever persecution may come for Your Name's sake, knowing that no trial can be hotter than the fiery furnace!

VOCABULARY

satrap - A prince with little authority serving an absolute ruler

OUTER AIM

To understand our Lord's training program for His own.

INNER AIM

To realize that our Lord never tests us beyond what we are able to bear.

BACKGROUND

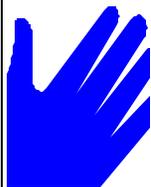
Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great colossus, with him and his empire being the head of gold.

Account - Nebuchadnezzar made an image completely overlaid with gold--not solid gold.

Dimensions--90 feet high and nine feet wide. Erected in the Plain of Dure--province of Babylon. Assembling of all political personages for the dedication of the image. At the sound of the music, all were to fall down and worship the image. The penalty for failing to worship the image was death in the fiery furnace.

The image - represented the man-made god--King Nebuchadnezzar. All the nations had their gods. The gods of the Babylonians outranked the gods of the other nations because they had given Nebuchadnezzar the victory over all other nations and their gods. From worshipping the gods of Babylon, it became easy for Nebuchadnezzar to cross the line and consider himself to be the chief god to be worshiped. So the command to worship the image was a command to acknowledge the gods of Babylon as superior to all other gods and Nebuchadnezzar as the highest and greatest of all gods on the earth. There is reason to believe that King Nebuchadnezzar erected this massive image after the fall of Judah and Jerusalem. He, as god, had conquered the God of the Jews. The bowing was thus a religious and civic function. Failing to bow would be the double crime of blasphemy and rebellion.

The Accusation - Certain Chaldeans accused Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego of failing to fall down and worship the image of Nebuchadnezzar. Accusers were political opponents of the three men. Though enraged by the fact that anyone would dare to disobey his command, Nebuchadnezzar sensed the reason for the charges brought against the three men. He offered them a second chance.



STUDENT PRAYER

Lord, grant me grace to obey the Holy Spirit when He lays on my heart the words of the Scriptures.

PRESENTATION

V. 16: "we have no need to answer you in this matter." No arrogance or fanaticism! The three are simply acknowledging the correction of the indictment made against them and declaring that there is no defense or apology that need be made. They cast themselves utterly upon God. It is a case where they were compelled to serve God rather than man, and for their noble faith they are evidently honored by the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews as those who by faith "quenched the violence of fire," Heb. 11:34,"

V. 17: "If our God whom we serve is able to deliver us..." There is here no doubting the omnipotence of the Lord God--His ability to save. The reference is to the "ethical ability" i.e., "the ability limited by the divine holiness and righteousness, not the omnipotence of God as such,"

The Lord could have saved all martyrs down through the ages, but he chose to let most die for their faith. The three repeat their refusal to bow down to Nebuchadnezzar 's image.

Deliverance-Nebuchadnezzar is furious. The furnace was heated the furnace seven times hotter. The three men were bound in their clothes, and thrown into the furnace by Nebuchadnezza's mighty men. The furnace was shaped like a beehive, fueled from the top with an opening on ground level. Mission accomplished, but outcome was entirely different from what Nebuchadnezzar expected.

Nebuchadnezzar, and apparently only he, saw four men walking around in the furnace. The fourth was described by Nebuchadnezzar as "a son of the gods," actually the pre-incarnate Son of God.

Nebuchadnezzar called to the three men to come out of the furnace. There were no bodily burns, their hair was not singed, garments were not burned, and there was no smell of fire on them.

Reaction of Nebuchadnezzar -- His decree: "...that any people, nation, or language which speaks anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made an ash heap, because there is no other God who can deliver like this," v. 29.

Compare Nebuchadnezzar 's word after Daniel revealed his dream and gave the interpretation thereof, 2:41: "Truly your God is the God of gods, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets." Nebuchadnezzar never rose above pagan polytheism.

APPLICATION

1. In our society the parallel of pagan polytheism with its many gods is an appeal to a generic god. As Nebuchadnezzar considered Jahve as one of the gods, on occasion even the greatest of the gods, so the Holy Trinity was considered to be one form of "god."

2. Comfort: No matter what the situation may be, our God is able to save us, but we must always prayer, "Thy will be done."

PASSAGES

These passages can be assigned as memory work or simply discussed in class as to how they fit the lesson.

Ps. 46:1 - God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble,

I Cor. 10:13 - God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

HYMN CHOICES

In the Hour of Trial - TLH #516

If Thou But Suffer God to Guide Thee - TLH #518