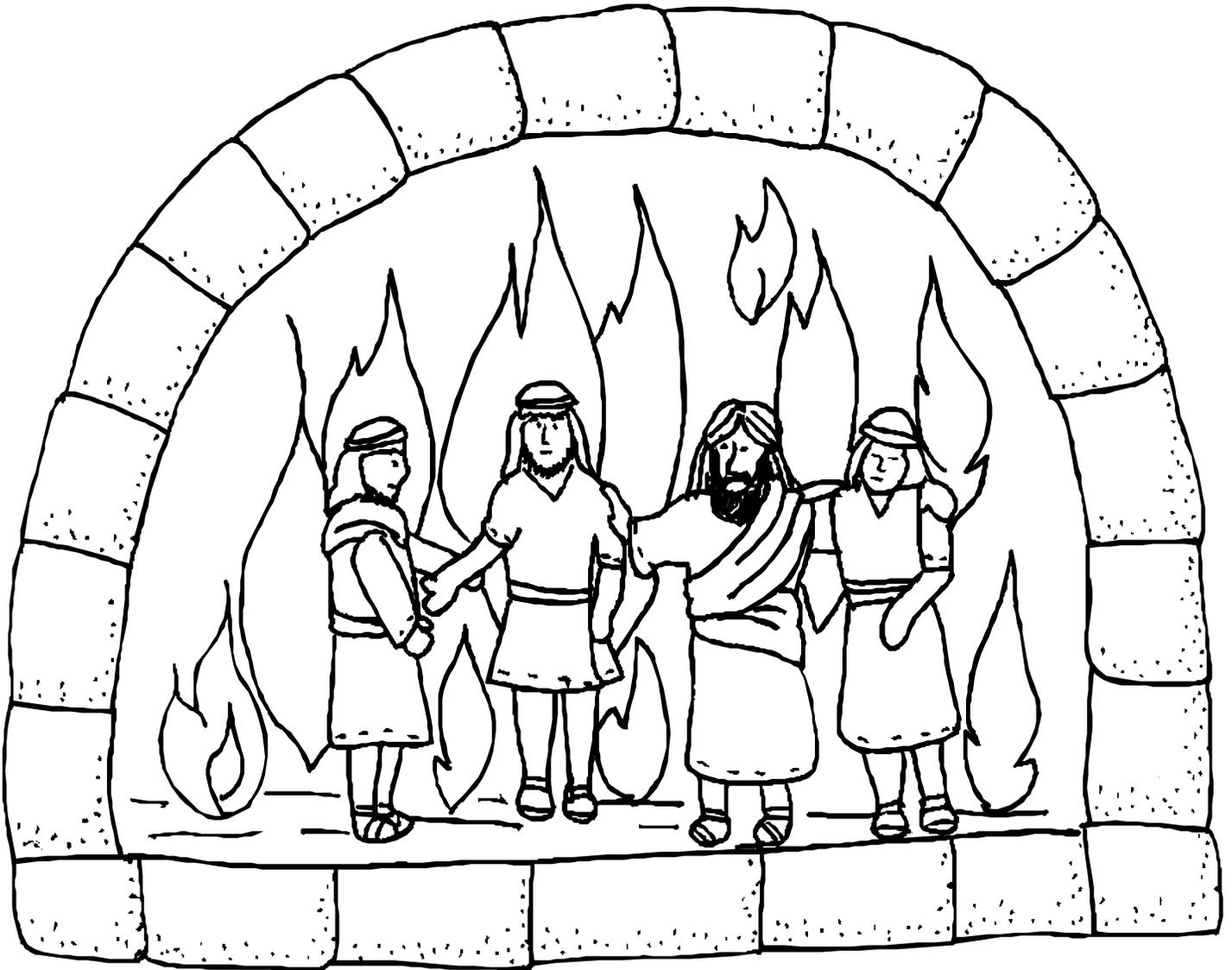


Three Men in the Fiery Furnace

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.