#### Lesson 7: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego

#### SCRIPTURE REFERENCE:

Daniel 3

#### MEMORY WORK:

Bible skills 1-6 Psalms 119:105

PERSONAL APPLICATION:

I must be willing to stand up for God even when it is not popular.

 **LESSON STARTS HERE**

INTRODUCTION:

Review last week’s lesson.

What are the names of the four young men we learned about last week? What choices did they make that pleased God? What do you think you would do if a king told you to do something that was wrong? In today’s lesson, we will learn how Daniel’s three friends refused to worship an idol King Nebuchadnezzar commanded them to worship. Let’s see what happens!

#### POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

**HISTORICAL NOTE**: These events probably took place around 584 B.C., about 20 years after Shadrach, Meshach, Abed-Nego, and Daniel were taken to Babylon as slaves. Ezekiel was also taken captive in the last and largest deportation; he was chosen by God to be a prophet among his fellow captives in Babylon.

When Nebuchadnezzar conquered Judah, he took away their soldiers (i.e., the Jews’ way of fighting back), their leaders, and all the symbols of their religion (stealing the objects in the Temple and, later, destroying the Temple itself). The golden image that Nebuchadnezzar had built to honor himself was no doubt made from the gold he had taken from Judah and other nations he had conquered.

1. Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, had a giant statue made of gold that was about 90 feet tall and nine feet wide. He had it set up in a plain where a multitude of people could come and worship before it. All the officials of the Babylonian Empire were called to worship this golden statue. They were ordered to bow down to the statue when they heard certain musical instruments play.
2. If anyone refused to fall down and worship the statue, the king ordered that person to be thrown into a fiery furnace. Of the crowd gathered that day, only three men refused to bow down. Some of his officials told Nebuchadnezzar, “There are certain Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon [Daniel 2:49], Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego; these men…do not serve your gods or worship the gold image which you have set up” (Daniel 3:12)
3. Even though he had appointed these men, along with Daniel, to positions of authority in his government and had previously said, “Truly your God is the God of gods, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets” (Daniel 2:47), Nebuchadnezzar was very angry that these three Jews would not bow down to the idol he had made. [He was quick to anger, as noted in Daniel 2:12 and 3:13,19. His question, “and what god is there who can deliver you out of my hands?” is reminiscent of Pharaoh’s rhetorical question: “Who is Jehovah that I should obey Him?”]
4. The king’s questions in Daniel 3:14,15 indicate that he knew why these three men did not bow down to his image. Their allegiance was promised to someone else—the one and only God whom the great king of Babylon did not know or fear.
5. Nebuchadnezzar said that he would give them another chance to obey his command, warning them that no god could deliver them from his hands. They answered him, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you [i.e., defend ourselves] 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” (vss. 16-17). Though they knew God was able to save them, they knew that He might choose not to save them for His own reasons. Regardless of God’s decision, however, they confidently and boldly stated to the king, “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” (vs. 18). The three men’s unshakable confidence and faith in Jehovah God (Daniel 3:17-18) only made the king angrier. [Similar to Peter and John’s defiant statement to Jewish leaders in Acts 4:19,20,29]
6. The king ordered the furnace to be heated seven times hotter than it was normally. Think about how Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego had to stand and watch the wood put into the oven until it became so hot that it killed anyone who approached it. The three men were securely tied up and thrown into the furnace, but there were no cries of agony or cries for help. Instead, the king quickly stood up and looked into the furnace where he saw three unbound men walking among the flames. Not only that, but another figure, who the king said was “like a son of the gods” was also in the furnace. Completely astounded, the king, himself, approached the hot furnace and told the men to come out, calling them “servants of the Most High God.”
7. Note verse 27: The king was astounded that the three were completely untouched by the fire. The king had no power at all against Almighty God! Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego knew that even if they were to die, God would reward them and care for them. They knew they could believe God’s promises to care for them and did their part by choosing to show their love for God instead of an idol.
8. If you are ever in a crowd where everyone else makes a bad choice, that doesn’t mean that you have to follow their example. Instead, you must choose to be different and hope they will follow your example. There have been many times that people who obeyed God have suffered for their faith; they were not always protected from physical harm. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego knew this and knew that they would serve God no matter what might happen to them. We must do the same.

**NOTE:** The text does not make it clear who was sent by God to rescue Daniel’s friends. The king sees someone that he concludes is a “son of the gods” (“gods” is a translation of the Hebrew word *elohim*, which can refer to God or to gods). Some translations say “the Son of God,” insisting that it was Jesus incarnate Who saved the boys. However, the underlying Hebrew does not demand that translation (e.g., “the” is not in the Hebrew and the phrase “a son of god/the gods” is a semitism which refers to angelic beings elsewhere—Job 1:6; 38:7), and since Nebuchadnezzar had not believed in God to that point (3:15), it is unlikely to conclude that he would have even known about Jesus, much less believed the savior of the boys was Jesus. Further, Nebuchadnezzar would not have known what the Son of God would have looked like to describe the being that way. Rather, it is likely that what he saw was an angelic being. As a polytheist, when thinking about angels, instead of calling them “sons of God,” he likely would have thought of them as “sons of gods.” In verse 28, Nebuchadnezzar says the boys’ God “sent His angel and delivered His servants who trusted in Him,” (1) indicating that he meant “angel” by “a son of the gods,” and

(2) indicating that he knew it was their God (singular) responsible for their salvation, possibly indicating that he had a better understanding of what happened by that point. Likely, the boys had explained who had delivered them after exiting the furnace.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL VISUALS (**note disclaimers**):

##### Free Bible Images on flash drive. These may be shown on classroom tv.

##### Betty Lukens’ felt pieces

##### Daniel ABeka Flash-A-Card Series (DISCLAIMERSuse the cards, not the lesson book)

##### Bible Study Guide for All Ages (BSGFAA) Lesson 17. These visuals will look like a black and white comic strip on one large piece of cardstock. To use these attach it to the magnetic dry erase board. Use dry erase markers to follow the directions. Let students take turns marking on the page.

##### *Facing the Blazing Furnace*, I Can Read book

##### Fiery Furnace images: <http://www.christart.com/clipart/image/fiery-furnace>; [http://www.goodsalt.com](http://www.goodsalt.com/search/results.html?search_terms=daniel&amp;advanced_search=0&amp;as=1&amp;ps=1&amp;sbook&amp;schapter&amp;sverse)

#### SONGS AND FINGERPLAYS :

**Jehovah Is Our King**

Words and Music by Keith Lancaster

Note- This is a long song with lots of lyrics. Consider just using the chorus or make a flip chart for verse 1 and 2.

We will not serve your god
Jehovah is our King

Chorus:
We will not serve your god (We will not serve your god)
We won't bow down before your image
We will not serve your god (We will not bow)
Jehovah is our King!

Nebuchadnezzer had built him an idol of gold- It was 90 feet high (and it was 9 feet wide)
He gave the order that everyone fall down and worship- Or else they would die
(Shadrach, Meshach) Shadrach, Meshach, and Abendego (would not bow down)
Would not bow down they just firmly said no!

Repeat Chorus

Furnace a blazin' the king was a ragin' with men who he wanted to die (he had them bound)
Making them fodder he turned it up hotter to kill them- He cranked it up high
(Thrown in the fire) Thrown in the fire to have them torched
No one hurt they were not even scorched (were not even scorched)

Repeat Chorus

So many idols and evil directions are given to us in our day (yes, every day) (so many idols are given)
We make decisions that alter our pathways forever - defining our way (we make decisions forever)
(Satan is crafty) Satan is crafty in selling sin (we won't give in)
We won't be taken, no we won't give in (won't give in)

Repeat Chorus

Bridge:
God is able to deliver us
No matter how hot the fire is raging
But even if He does not deliver us
We won't bow down in a million - million years

Repeat Chorus (without stepouts)

Repeat Chorus

Jehovah is our King
Jehovah is our King (our King)

### SUNDAY

LEARNING CENTERS AND ACTIVITIES:

* Act out the story. Tape orange, red, and yellow crepe streamers to the edges of a box fan.

 Turn on the fan to make the “flames” move. Ask some of the children to make sizzling noises and some to crush aluminum foil for the crackling sound of flames. Let some of the children dress up like the three Jewish men and the king.

* Make copies of a coloring sheet of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the fiery furnace

 for each child. Let the children color their sheets, then glue pieces of red, yellow, and orange tissue paper onto the paper to represent flames.

### WEDNESDAY NIGHT

#### POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. Review Sunday’s lesson. (See [Review Questions](http://www.apcurriculum.com/dcirfol/4-24-32RQ.pdf) for example questions.)

LEARNING CENTERS AND ACTIVITIES:

* Object Lesson- Talk about things that keep us safe (sunscreen, bug spray, helmets, hi-vis jackets, etc.). Put an orange in a deep clear container of water and watch it bob along the surface. Then peel off the skin and watch it sink. The peel is what protects the orange and stops it from sinking. God was like the peel for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.



### Review Questions

1. What giant thing did Nebuchadnezzar have built?
	1. A golden statue
2. When were the people ordered to bow down to the golden statue?
	1. When they heard certain musical instruments played
3. What would happen to anyone who refused to worship the statue?
	1. They would be thrown into a fiery furnace
4. Which three men refused to bow down?
	1. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego
5. How did Nebuchadnezzar feel about the men not bowing down?
	1. He was angry.
6. The king ordered what to be done to the furnace?
	1. Heat the furnace seven times hotter than normal
7. After the three men were thrown into the fiery furnace, what did the king hear?
	1. Nothing. No cries of pain or cries for help.
8. What did the king see when he looked into the fiery furnace?
	1. Three unbound men walking among the flames and another figure who was like a “son of the gods.”
9. What did Nebuchadnezzar call the three men when they came out of the furnace?
	1. Servants of the Most High God.

Additional Notes / Activities Performed & Curriculum Feed Back

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