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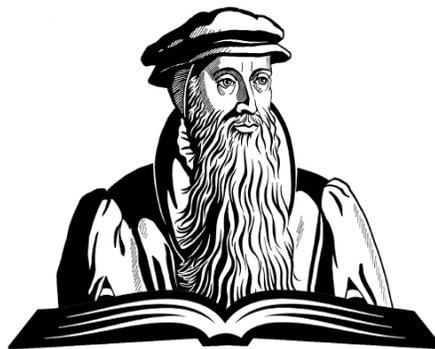
**BIBLE FOR
6TH GRADE STUDENTS**

Old Testament

Lesson 87

The Three Friends in the Fiery Furnace

Lecture Presenter: Dr. Daniel Sweetman



The John Knox Institute
of Higher Education

Entrusting our Reformed Inheritance to the Church Worldwide

John Knox Institute of Higher Education

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Module

BIBLE FOR 6TH GRADE STUDENTS

Old Testament

113 LESSONS

(Additional lessons forthcoming)

77 Lessons presented by Mr. Daniel Van Brugge

36 Lessons presented by Dr. Daniel Sweetman

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|--|---|
| 01. The Bible: The Word of God | 26. Joseph and His Brethren |
| 02. Creation: The Work of an Almighty God | 27. Jacob Comes to Joseph |
| 03. Man: A Special Place in God's Creation | 28. God Heard Their Cry |
| 04. A Gracious Promise | 29. Moses and the Burning Bush |
| 05. Cain and Abel | 30. Let My People God |
| 06. Only Noah Found Grace | 31. Deliverance |
| 07. The Coming Judgment –A Way of Escape | 32. God's Patience with a Complaining People |
| 08. The Noahic Covenant | 33. Keeping the Law: Not to Merit /Thankfulness |
| 09. The Tower of Babel | 34. The Lord Dwells Among His People |
| 10. Abram: Called by God | 35. A Priest for the People |
| 11. Abram Intercedes for Lot | 36. Moses Intercedes for a Rebellious People |
| 12. Melchizadek | 37. Worshiping God Rightly |
| 13. Righteous by Faith | 38. Walk Not According to the World |
| 14. Two Sons | 39. Hearts of Ingratitude |
| 15. Lessons from Lot's Life | 40. Aaron's Rod Blossoming |
| 16. Faithless Abraham – Faithful God | 41. The Serpent of Brass Lifted Up |
| 17. Abraham Tested – God's Provision | 42. Phinehas Turning Away God's Wrath |
| 18. Isaac and Rebekah | 43. Cities of Refuge |
| 19. Jacob: A Better Desire than Esau | 44. A New Generation |
| 20. Jacob the Deceiver | 45. Moses' Last Days |
| 21. God Preserves Jacob | 46. Joshua—God's Promise Fulfilled |
| 22. Jacob Returns to Beth-el | 47. A Promise to Rahab |
| 23. Joseph Loved – Joseph Hated | 48. The Rise of Judges |
| 24. An Eye upon God | 49. Gideon—God with Him |
| 25. Joseph Raised Out of Prison | 50. Samson |

51. Ruth the Moabitess
52. Samuel Judges Israel
53. Israel's First King
54. The Kingdom Established
55. David Anointed the Next King
56. David Hunted by Saul
57. The Last Days of Saul
58. David, the Next King
59. Fetching the Ark
60. Thou Art the Man
61. David's Return to Jerusalem
62. Seven Sons of Saul Killed
63. Genealogies of Israel
64. David Appointed King
65. David's Kingdom Established
66. David Prepares for the Temple
67. David's Departing Instructions
68. Solomon Becomes King
69. Solomon Builds the House of God
70. The Kingdom is Rent
71. A Wicked Divided Kingdom
72. Ahab's Reign and Death
73. Elisha Begins his Work
74. Elisha's Voice is Heard
75. A Succession of Kings
76. Ahaz and Hezekiah
77. The Captivity of Judah
78. Introduction to the Prophets
79. Isaiah's Vision & Song
80. Isaiah Prophecies about Christ
81. The Prophet Jeremiah Called and Sent
82. Jeremiah Opposed and Comforted
83. Ezekiel, the Captive Prophet
84. Ezekiel's Comforting Visions
85. Daniel and His Three Friends
86. Nebuchadnezzar's Forgotten Dream
- 87. Three Friends in the Fiery Furnace**
88. Nebuchadnezzar's Madness
89. The Writing on the Wall
90. Daniel in the Lion's Den
91. Daniel's Visions and Dreams
92. Ezra—Return from Captivity
93. Ezra—Rebuilding the Temple
94. Ezra—The Scribe
95. Nehemiah—Rebuilding the Walls
96. Nehemiah—The Task Completed
97. Esther the Queen
98. Esther—Haman's Plot
99. Esther—The Jews Saved
100. Hosea—The Minor Prophets
101. Joel and the Day of the LORD
102. Amos the Fearless Herdsman
103. Obadiah Prophecies Edom's Fall
104. Jonah's Flight
105. Jonah's Mission
106. Micah Preaches Judgment & Mercy
107. Nahum—A Message for Nineveh
108. Habakkuk's Questions, God's Replies
109. Zephaniah—Threatenings & Promises
110. Haggai Urges Building the Temple
111. Zechariah—The Night Visions
112. Zechariah Prophecies of Christ
113. Malachi—Last Old Testament Prophet

Lesson 87

The Three Friends in the Fiery Furnace

The Book of Daniel, chapter 3

Memory Verse

“When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.”—Isaiah 43:2

The Image of Gold

In chapter 2, we read how Nebuchadnezzar dreamed of a great image with a head of gold. In chapter 3, we also read of a great image, this one a real one constructed at the command of the king in the plain of Dura outside of Babylon. We don't know if the shape was similar to the image the king had seen in his dream, but in one way it was different. Not only the head, but the entire image was made of gold. Perhaps Nebuchadnezzar, filled with pride because of all his recent victories, was proclaiming to all that his kingdom would indeed last forever. All the important rulers and officials from all the conquered territories were ordered to come to the plain for a huge dedication feast in honor of the statue, which may have represented Bel, the chief god of Babylon. Then came the grand moment of the feast. As soon as the band started playing, everyone gathered in the plain united together in falling down and worshipping the image. Everyone except for three men.

Refusing to Bow

At the end of Daniel chapter 2, we read that Daniel's three friends, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego—their Babylonian names—had received important positions in the province of Babylon. Therefore they could not refuse to attend. They listened to the instructions given by the king's herald, and saw the fiery furnace which the herald pointed out would be the fate of anyone who refused to join in worshipping the image. Why did they not bow? Their important positions allowed them to do much good for their own people. Should they throw away their lives and their good influence? Surely God would know that in their hearts they would never serve anyone but him.

When they were brought before the king, Nebuchadnezzar even gave them a second chance! However, the three friends did not waver. They said to the king, “We are not careful to answer thee in this matter.” They did not feel the need to explain or excuse themselves. Bowing to the image would clearly be a sin against God's commandments. No threats or promises could change their mind about obeying the God they loved. “Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace,” they said, “But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.” Probably no one had ever stood up to the proud king in this way before. With his face contorted with rage, Nebuchadnezzar ordered

the furnace to be heated seven times hotter. It became so hot that in the act of throwing the three friends into the furnace, the servants of the king were themselves killed by the terrible heat.

Saved from the Fiery Furnace

Nebuchadnezzar was content. No one would challenge his authority after this! But he was in for the biggest shock of his life. God would make clear to the proud king and all his subjects that “the Most High ruleth,” and “all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing” (Daniel 4:32, 35). When Nebuchadnezzar looked into the fiery furnace sometime later, he saw moving figures! To his astonishment he realized it was Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego walking in the fire unharmed. And he also saw a fourth figure, who looked like the Son of God! “Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth,” the astonished king cried out. How people must have crowded around the three friends after they came out. No hair was singed! There was not even the smell of smoke! No wonder the deeply impressed king cried out, “Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who had sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him.” The feast which was intended for the honor of the god of Nebuchadnezzar, ended in honor of the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego—the Lord God Almighty.

What a great demonstration of love and faithfulness to God! Do you have such love and faithfulness which would enable you to make a bold stand for the Lord? Peter’s denial of his Master in the hall of Caiaphas clearly shows us that we can never do so in our own strength, but only when the Holy Spirit fills us with that love. Notice the boldness of the same Peter at the feast of Pentecost. The Lord Jesus said, “How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him” (Luke 11:13).

Review Questions

1. Who did Nebuchadnezzar gather together for the feast of dedication?

_____, _____, _____, _____, _____,
_____, _____, and all _____

2. What was the signal for everyone to bow?

- a. When the king entered
- b. When the music started
- c. When the statue was unveiled
- d. When the herald said so

3. Who accused Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego before the King?

4. The three friends were accused of all these things except one. What were they not accused of? (Daniel 2:12)

- a. Not coming to the feast
- b. Not regarding the King
- c. Not serving his gods
- d. Not worshiping the golden image

5. What question did the king ask the three friends in Daniel 2:15?

6. What did Shadrach Meshach and Abednego NOT say to the king?

- a. God was able to deliver them from the burning fiery furnace.
- b. They would not be burned.
- c. God would deliver them out of the king's hand.
- d. They would not serve his gods, nor worship the golden image.

7. Fill in the blanks from the scripture.

He answered and said, Lo, I see _____ men _____, _____ in the midst of the _____, and they have no _____, and the _____ of the _____ is like the _____ of _____.

8. Who was the fourth man that Nebuchadnezzar saw in the furnace?

Discussion Questions

1. In question 5, you wrote down the question which the king asked the three friends. How does the king answer his own question at the end of the chapter?

2. Nebuchadnezzar's anger was fierce, and the fiery furnace very hot. Who did the three friends fear more? Why? Look up Matthew 10:28. _____

3. The three friends did come to the feast. They did not bow to the image. What does this chapter teach us about obedience to authorities?
