LESSON 15

THE IMAGE OF GOLD



Aim: **To show the children how Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego showed that faith in God is better than fear of people in power.**

Scripture Reading: **Daniel 3:1-18**

Memory Verse: **Exodus 2:11 (the Ten Commandments)**

"For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy."

Review last week's memory verse and complete verse 11 this week.

Presenting the Lesson

Starting Point

Take a torch along to class and shine the light on the children. They probably will shield their eyes against the bright light.

Main Points of the Lesson

1. King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had an enormous statue made of gold. It was set up on a plain so it could be seen from a long way off, shining brightly in the sun like a torch (Dan 3:1). **You and your class could measure out the size on the ground.** It was almost 30 metres high and almost three metres wide.
2. Nebuchadnezzar had become very proud. He ruled over a very large kingdom and it was the custom for rulers in those days to put up large statues of themselves. Perhaps King Nebuchadnezzar even thought of himself as a god and wanted the people to bow down to him, showing how great and clever he was. There was a great opening ceremony, where everyone had to bow before the king's statue (3:2-5). **Show Picture 15.** There was a terrible punishment for anyone who would not obey, so everybody obeyed (3:6-7).
3. Everybody but Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. They were the three friends of Daniel who came with him as Jewish prisoners to Babylon. They were still slaves, but had been given great responsibility in the government and some Babylonians were jealous of them. They plotted to get rid of them, and now they saw their chance. They told Nebuchadnezzar about these three foreigners who disobeyed the king's orders. They were Jews, who worshipped only one God (3:8-12).
   Let the class recite the relevant part of the Ten Commandments: Exodus 20:1-6.

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4. The king was very angry when he heard about Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego's disobedience to his command. He sent for them and questioned them. There was no god who could rescue them from the powerful king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar thought (3:13-15).
5. The three men's answer is very important, because it shows their faith in God as well as their commitment to God, no matter what. They replied, "The God we serve is able to save us! But even if he doesn't, we will not worship the golden statue or any other god" (3:16-18).

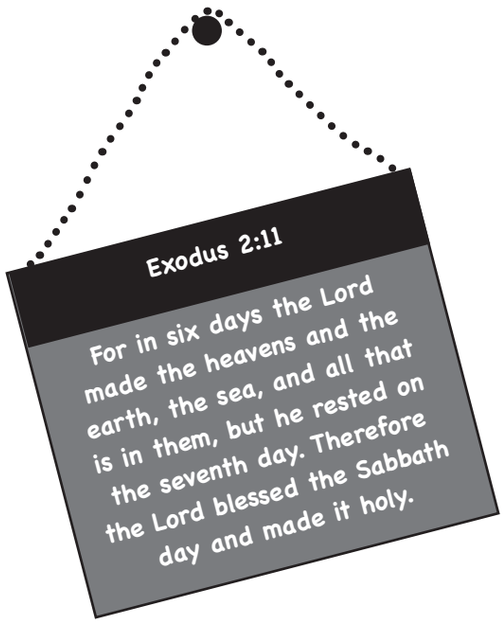
Our Response to the Story

Obedience to God's commandments comes before anything else. Everybody who was at that ceremony saw Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego's witness. These young men did not hide their faith or their God.

In January 1994 a bishop was killed for his faith in God. Just before he died he said, "I am ready to die for the cause of the church so that others will be able to worship their God peacefully and without so much fear. I will not die a silent death." Pray for Christians who are suffering for their Christian witness today.

Like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, we have to accept that God does not always take away our suffering. But we can hold on to our faith and be witnesses for the Lord, no matter what the circumstances or the outcome.

Instil the Memory Verse



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