



“ EXODUS 20:4,5

“Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image... Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them”.



EXPLANATION OF MEMORY VERSE

We are commanded not to make any kind of graven image for worship or devotion toward God.



THEME OF LESSON

God's people should not conform to the Babylonian (pagan) style of worship.



PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Obedying God's commandments will sometimes take faith and courage. It also comes with a cost. The good news is that when you take a stand for the Lord, He will be with you.



BACKGROUND OF LESSON

King Nebuchadnezzar had some things go to his head (Dan.2:38), and he decided to set up his image. Perhaps he was concerned about that image in his dream that was going to be destroyed. Maybe this was an attempt to preserve his legacy in spite of what Daniel told him (Dan.2:44). All those who didn't fall down to worship were to be cast into a fiery furnace.

I. The Prideful King (Dan.3:1-7)

- A. King Nebuchadnezzar was full of pride. He wanted to unite everyone under his headship. This idol may have been a representation of himself, a false god, or of symbolic nature. Whatever it was, it represented submission to his evil domain.
 1. He put it in the plain of Dura so it wouldn't be overshadowed by the buildings of Babylon.
 2. It was about 90 feet tall and 6 feet wide.
- B. When the God of Heaven is not worshipped, man will worship anything.
 1. It usually ends up being himself or something he invents.
 2. Man loves to glorify himself instead of God. It comes naturally.
 3. Man is prone to worship creation as well.
- C. Notice how "music" and "unity" were used to prompt and motivate the idol worship.
 1. "All kinds of music" (Dan.3:7). This would appeal to everyone.
 2. The devil knows how to use music to move, motivate, and manipulate.
- D. At the sound of the music, they were commanded to worship the image that was set up.
 1. Music is a wonderful gift from God and should be used to glorify God, not idols.
 2. If a person is filled with the Spirit, he will listen to music that feeds the spirit, not the flesh. "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Eph.5:19).



II. The Promise of Persecution

- A. Whosoever didn't worship at the sound of the music was cast into a fiery furnace to die.
 - 1. Persecution and trials are normal for God's people (2Tim.3:12) (Phil.1:29) (1Pet.4:12,13).
 - 2. Notice how they accused the Jews (Dan.3:8). Why do you think this was? (Jn.15:18-20)
- B. King Nebuchadnezzar wanted to know if Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego were going to worship his gods and the image (Dan.3:14). He also wanted to know what God would deliver them if they didn't. (Dan.3:15).
 - 1. They knew it was wrong to worship images (Ex.20:4,5)!
 - 2. (Acts 5:29) "We ought to obey God rather than men."
 - 3. As Christians, we must obey the laws of the land, unless they violate God's law.
- C. Would it have been easy for the three to "just give in" and follow along with the majority?
 - 1. As God's people, we are not called to take the easy way. We are called to take God's way.
 - 2. Following the Lord comes with a cost.

III. The Promise of Preservation

- A. God will never forsake His own when they go through the fiery trial. He may not keep us out of the furnace, but He will go with us and bring us through for His glory (Is.43:2) (Heb.11:33-34).
- B. They knew God was able (Dan.3:17).
- C. Even if it was God's will for them to burn, they purposed in their hearts to still do right (Dan.3:17,18).
- D. They were bound together and cast into the furnace, heated seven times hotter than its norm. The men that threw them in ended up being consumed by the hot flames (Dan.3:19-23).

IV. The Promise of Promotion

- A. Going through the fire got them close to the "Son of God" (Dan.3:25).
- B. Going through the fire set them free from their bonds. They were loosed (Dan.3:25). Suffering for Christ gives us joyful liberty from sin and the world. It is far better to go through a furnace of fire than to live in a lake of fire for eternity!
- C. Their experience glorified God before others (1Cor.6:19,20).
- D. The king promoted them and gave them honors (Dan.3:30). This is a foreshadowing of rewards in the Millennial reign of Christ (2Tim.2:12).
- E. (Dan.3:28) shows us a great lesson... TRUST – YIELD – WORSHIP GOD.
- F. Daniel must have been away on business when this happened.
- G. The three Jews remind us of the 144,000 Jews that will be preserved during the Tribulation.
- H. King Nebuchadnezzar and the image remind us of the image that the Antichrist will set up during the Tribulation (Rev.13:15).