Idols

 Level 4 Lesson 68

* **Introduction**

What is idolatry anyway? Wasn’t that way back in the day? You know, the Old Testament guys who carved images, and set them up to worship. Could it be possible that we have idols in our day and age?

* **Lesson**

We can learn about idolatry in the Bible. Remember, the Bible is our schoolmaster.

When Daniel and the three Hebrew children were captured and taken into captivity in Babylon with King Nebuchadnezzar, they had their faithfulness to the one true God tested.

***Dan 3:1*** *Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, (90 feet tall)and the breadth thereof six cubits( 9 feet wide): he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.*

*Dan 3:2 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.*

It is amazing how that even back in that day, when people put other things before God, they always try to get others involved. Idol worshippers always want someone else involved in their mess.

*Dan 3:3 Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up.*

*Dan 3:4 Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages,*

*Dan 3:5 That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up:*

*Dan 3:6 And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.*

*Dan 3:7 Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of musick, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down and worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.*

It seems as though all of the other Israelites succumbed to the worship of an idol of a heathen land, along with other people and nations.

*Dan 3:8 Wherefore at that time certain Chaldeans came near, and accused the Jews.*

*Dan 3:9 They spake and said to the king Nebuchadnezzar, O king, live for ever.*

*Dan 3:10 Thou, O king, hast made a decree, that every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, shall fall down and worship the golden image:*

*Dan 3:11 And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth, that he should be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.*

*Dan 3:12 There are certain Jews whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; these men, O king, have not regarded thee: they serve not thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.*

*Dan 3:13 Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Then they brought these men before the king.*

*Dan 3:14 Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?*

*Dan 3:15 Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made; well: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?*

*Dan 3:16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter.*

*Dan 3:17 If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king.*

*Dan 3:18 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.*

*Dan 3:19 Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: therefore he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated.*

*Dan 3:20 And he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace.*

*Dan 3:21 Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.*

*Dan 3:22 Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.*

*Dan 3:23 And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.*

*Dan 3:24 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonied, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king.*

*Dan 3:25 He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.*

*Dan 3:26 Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, and spake, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, came forth of the midst of the fire.*

*Dan 3:27 And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them.*

*Dan 3:28 Then Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God.*

*Dan 3:29 Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort.*

Finally, King Nebuchadnezzar got a revelation of who the one, true God is. But he did not get this understanding without the three Hebrew children’s refusal to worship any other god. They did not care what happened. They knew that their God was **THE** God, and that He would take care of them. What a wonderful, peaceful feeling it is to know that you are taken care of, no matter what, as long as you stand with God.

All through the Bible there are admonitions to serve God with the promise of great rewards. But there are also many admonitions to not serve other gods, with the promise of great curses. Deciding who to serve doesn’t seem to be a difficult decision, but Satan’s only job is to tempt us to serve other gods. It seems as though our flesh doesn’t listen to reason when we are drawn away with our own lusts, and tempted. We are so proud of the three Hebrew boys, but where do we stand in our everyday life? Would we bow to the gods of this world? What about if we were to be killed if we did not bow? This story in the Bible is included to give us instruction when we are faced with real life threats.

*Deu 11:16 Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them;*

*Deu 11:17 And then the LORD'S wrath be kindled against you, and he shut up the heaven, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit; and lest ye perish quickly from off the good land which the LORD giveth you.*

*Deu 11:18 Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes.*

*Deu 11:19 And ye shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.*

*Deu 11:20 And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates:*

*Deu 11:21 That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the LORD sware unto your fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon the earth.*

We must have the blessings of God on our life!

*1Ki 9:5 Then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever, as I promised to David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel.*

*1Ki 9:6 But if ye shall at all turn from following me, ye or your children, and will not keep my commandments and my statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods, and worship them:*

*1Ki 9:7 Then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all people:*

*1Ki 9:8 And at this house, which is high, every one that passeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss; and they shall say, Why hath the LORD done thus unto this land, and to this house?*

*1Ki 9:9 And they shall answer, Because they forsook the LORD their God, who brought forth their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have taken hold upon other gods, and have worshipped them, and served them: therefore hath the LORD brought upon them all this evil.*

It never pays to turn your back on God. One would much rather have the devil against us, than to have the Lord against us.

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*Isa 46:5 To whom will ye liken me, and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like?*

*Isa 46:6 They lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, and hire a goldsmith; and he maketh it a god: they fall down, yea, they worship.*

*Isa 46:7 They bear him upon the shoulder, they carry him, and set him in his place, and he standeth; from his place shall he not remove: yea, one shall cry unto him, yet can he not answer, nor save him out of his trouble.*

*Isa 46:8 Remember this, and shew yourselves men: bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors.*

*Isa 46:9 Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me,*

*Isa 46:10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:*

You notice in verse eight, that He says, “and shew yourselves men.” It requires some toughness to stand up against all of the evil gods of this world, and serve the only, true God. If we read these scriptures, the gods they turned to seem so ridiculous, but what about the gods of our world? If our life was in the scriptures would others think that the gods of our day are ridiculous? To us they are very real and very tempting.

*Luk 4:5 And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.*

*Luk 4:6 And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.*

*Luk 4:7 If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.*

*Luk 4:8 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.*

No one is exempt from the temptation of idol worship. But there is a clear message in the Word to stand up against it, no matter what it is.

The Word of God is our power against the gods of this world. If Jesus used the Word, then He expects us to use the Word, as well. Who are we worshipping and serving?

* **Activity**

This a great lesson to have a discussion about the gods that your students have to deal with in their lives. It is always a good idea to have them write them down. This exercise will help them identify things that they must watch out for. After they have identified the temptation, brainstorm to find verses in the Bible to combat that temptation. This is very important, so don’t skip this part. The students need tools.

The enemy is tricky. Sometimes he will sneak up on you. Then you may desire to discuss with them how they think they might respond to the Mark of the Beast if faced with that.