



LESSON 3 FOR LEADERS

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Is with Us in Hard Things

SCRIPTURE: Daniel 3

WORD OF WONDER: Hebrews 13:5b

Have you ever seen a runner in a distance race who is calmly and confidently running near the middle of the pack until the final two laps, when she suddenly pushes to the front and crosses the finish line first? It takes quiet confidence in your training to choose not to panic and push but to know that the work has been done. Then, when you trust in your race plan, the results will follow.

Read Daniel 3. I picture Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego with that same quiet confidence. They knew that to panic and bow to a statue would not be right before God. They knew who would hold the victory in the end. So, they stayed the course. They responded to the king that their God would deliver them. “But even if he does not” (Daniel 3:18, NIV), they would not bow down.

They were so confident God was with them—in the trial, and in the fire—that they were willing to stake their lives on it.

Do you have the quiet confidence that God is with you in difficult things? God didn’t stop the men from being thrown in the furnace; instead, He joined them in it. They may have felt the heat, but with their eyes fixed on God, they knew He was with them and would not let them perish.

—**Courtney Wilson**

Children’s Pastor

Contributor to Wonder Ink

LESSON 3 FOR LEADERS

THE FIERY FURNACE

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were born in Judah with the Hebrew names of Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. They were exiled to Babylon after Jerusalem was conquered. Along with Daniel, they were trained for three years to serve in the king's court.

WHAT?

King Nebuchadnezzar builds a gold statue and decrees that when musicians play special music, everyone has to stop and bow to the statue. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, now young officials in the king's court, refuse. So, the king throws them into a blazing furnace. However, they survive with God's help.

WHERE?

Babylon was the capital city of the Babylonian empire, a port city on the Euphrates River that grew to be one of the most populated cities in Mesopotamia. It is the site of the Hanging Gardens, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, in modern-day Iraq.

WHEN?

In 605 BC, after the Egyptians were unable to stop Nebuchadnezzar, the regions of Syria, Palestine, and Judah fell under Babylonian control. At this point, Daniel and his friends were taken as captives to Babylon. In 587, Judah rebelled but lost. Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

In the blazing furnace story, God reveals His character as our Savior. This character is most fully revealed in Jesus, who saves us from our sin and invites us to live with God forever.



Curiosity

Belief

Faith

Identity

LESSON 3 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Play Stations

SUPPLIES: blocks (3); coins (4); pom-poms (3); craft sticks (4); dry beans (3); colored beads (4); coloring utensils

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: The Fiery Furnace Coloring Sheet (1 per kid)

Greet kids warmly as they arrive and briefly explain the play stations. Invite them to play at any of the play stations.

Welcome to church! While we're getting ready to start, you can play at any of these stations to help get ready for our lesson today. Do you have any ideas of what we'll be learning about today?

Play Station: Can You Sort It?

Set-up: On a table, set out the blocks, coins, pom-poms, craft sticks, dry beans, and colored beads. Mix them up so the kids can sort them into their specific item groups.

Play: Allow the kids to sort the objects into piles. Encourage the kids to count how many of each object is on the table. They should sort the objects into groups of three and four.



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LESSON 3 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use the prayer here or your own words: **God, thank You for all the good things in our lives. We know that sometimes hard things happen. Holy Spirit, help us see You in those times and to hear from You in our story today. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

God's Big Story

Pull out the Bible

Ask: What is this called? The Bible

Ask: Why is the Bible special? Because it is God's word. Everything in it is true. It really happened.

Tell the Bible Story

The Beginner's Bible, pages 247-250

Fiery Furnace

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What did the king want everyone to do? *(bow down to the statue)*
- Why didn't Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego bow down to the statue?
(They would only bow to God.)
- When Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego didn't worship the statue, what did the king do?
(He had them thrown into a fiery furnace.)
- What happened when the men were in the fiery furnace? *(God saved them; a fourth person was seen walking around with them.)*
- What is something hard that you've been through?
- How has God helped you?
- What can you remember about God the next time you go through something hard?

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego stood up for God no matter what, even when they were the only ones! God is with us in hard things.

Word of Wonder

WORD OF WONDER

God has said, “I will never leave you.”

— Hebrews 13:5b

Encourage the kids to do the motions and say the verse with you.

Gather kids to discuss these questions:

- **What does God promise us in this verse?**
- **When we go through hard things, what will God do?**



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LESSON 3 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Game: Walking Through the Fire

SUPPLIES: red, yellow, and orange streamers; scissors (prep only); large plastic hoops (2), tape (prep only)

Before the kids arrive, cut off strips of streamers and tape them to the outside of the large plastic hoops to make the “fire.” Kids will go through the hoops doing different actions in a relay race.

Hold up both large plastic hoops. **In our story today, three men walked through fire, and God saved them. To help us remember how God saved the men and how God helps us through hard things, we’re going to play a game. We’re going to pretend that these are fire rings, and we’ll go through them in different ways! The first team to do the action and get everyone through the hoop will win.**

Divide the class into two teams. Go to the other end of the room with the large plastic hoop. Have another adult hold the large plastic hoop for the other team.

Have the kids run to the hoop and perform one of the following actions each round:

- jump through the hoop
- crawl
- walk

Way to walk through the fire! You did a good job listening and obeying my instructions. You were like the three men in our story who obeyed God and stood up for Him. Remember, when hard things happen, God is with us!