



LESSON 3

THE FIERY FURNACE

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Is with Us in Difficult Thing

SCRIPTURE: Daniel 3

GOD'S BIG STORY: Three young Jewish men refuse to worship a gold statue, so they are thrown into a blazing furnace—an experience they survive with God's help.

WORD OF WONDER: God has said, "I will never leave you. I will never desert you." —Hebrews 13:5b

CURIOSITY

BELIEF

FAITH

- ***Pre-service Object Lesson: Uh, Oh!**
- Welcome Question: What's something others might find hard, but you could teach them to do? Teach someone now!
- SMALL GROUP
- Prayer of Invitation
- Declaring God's Wonder
- Worship: My Help, Praise
- God's Big Story
- Connecting the Wonder Truth
- Responding in Worship: I Exalt Thee/I Speak Jesus
- Blessing Your Kids



God With Us Elementary Spotify playlist

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 Difficult 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 in God that He 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

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 in 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.

Large Group

Spark curiosity, encourage exploration, and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Is with Us in Difficult Thing

SCRIPTURE: Daniel 3

WORD OF WONDER: Hebrews 13:5b

As kids arrive...

Around 20 minutes before service begins, display series theme loop. Play high-energy music in the background.

LG Leader walks around the room on mic and greets kids by name as they enter the room. Welcome kids by name and greet them with enthusiasm. Be extra intentional about hearing and responding to what they say. Introduce yourself to new families as they walk in the door.

SLIDE: SERIES THEME LOOP

VIDEO: COUNTDOWN (2min OR 30sec) Start a countdown to begin game 10 minutes prior to service)

Object Lesson: Uh, Oh!

7–10 min pre-service!

SUPPLIES: whiteboard, permanent marker, small bowl of water, dish rag or sponge, towel, dry-erase marker and eraser

SLIDE: UH-OH

Invite volunteers to answer this question: **What's a difficult thing in our life or the life of a friend?** Jot one of their responses on the whiteboard with the permanent marker. (Limit what you write on the whiteboard to one or two words.) If kids struggle to respond, help them focus by asking about hard things at school, home, in a friendship, etc. Thank kids for sharing and remind them God is with them when dealing with difficult thing .



Leader Tip: For Younger Kids. “Difficul ” may not be a word younger kids understand, but they all know what it means to have a “hard time” or to face a “hard thing.” Feel free to substitute those phrases if needed for younger kids.

Tell kids you need to erase the board before moving on, then rub the eraser across the board—nothing will be erased. Ask for a volunteer to come up and try erasing harder. Ask someone to use the water and rag or sponge to wipe the writing away. Neither will help. Dry the whiteboard with the towel.

Ask kids to suggest what might erase the board. If a suggestion is practical, let someone try it. Toss in suggestions of your own: Someone could lick the letters off (but don't let anyone actually try this!), maybe shaking the board will dislodge the writing. (If someone suggests the actual solution, writing over the permanent marker with a dry-erase marker, thank her for the idea but try other solutions first.) Finally, write over the writing with a dry-erase marker and then use the eraser. Ta-dah! The writing will vanish.

Wow! That was a very difficult situation. Thank you for being with me and helping me! This reminds me of someone else who is with us in hard and difficult times.

SLIDE: WONDER TRUTH

Today's Wonder Truth is **GOD IS WITH US IN DIFFICULT THINGS."**



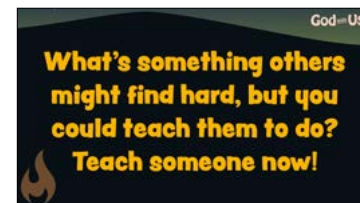
Leader Tip: We've never met a whiteboard where this won't work, but test the activity in a corner of your whiteboard to be sure it works on yours. If you need a whiteboard, check with your local dollar store to find a small one

Welcome Question

SLIDE: WELCOME QUESTION

At service start time, draw kids' attention to the Welcome Question.

Invite kids to write answers on the poster board or whiteboard. Share your own answer, and ask 2-3 kids to briefly share their answers aloud.



Consider giving kids some examples of special skills they might have and can teach others, such as how to say "Hello" in another language, do a fancy handshake, recite a Bible verse they have memorized, or perform a certain dance move.

"We all face difficult things from time to time. A tough test, someone bullying us, a disagreement with a friend. There are lots of things that can make life hard. When they happen, we aren't alone, and today we'll discover why that's true. But, first, it's time for small group."

Small Group

Introduce small group time. While kids are in small group, consider sitting in the groups for a few minutes each. Engage and interact as is appropriate.

Countdown

After about 15 minutes of small group, give a 5 minute warning and begin the countdown.

VIDEO: COUNTDOWN

"Hey everyone! Welcome to our Large Group Worship time! My name is ____ and I'm excited to take this time to worship God, review what we just read, and talk about ways we can respond to what we are learning about God! We are going to pray as we prepare our hearts to worship God!"

Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into worship, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use your own words. Here is an example: **God, You are with me when I face difficult thing , and I thank You. You are always faithful, always true, and Your Holy Spirit leads me. I want to follow You. Help me to learn more about You through Your big story today. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

Declaring God's Wonder

SLIDE: DECLARATION

Read each line boldly and invite kids to repeat after you.

Thank You, God, that You are good! (Kids repeat.)

You made me on purpose, for a purpose. (Kids repeat.)

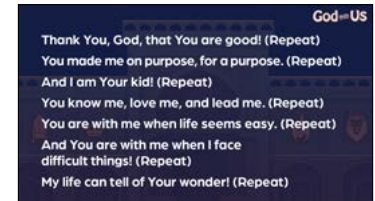
And I am Your kid! (Kids repeat.)

You know me, love me, and lead me.(Kids repeat.)

You are with me when life seems easy, (Kids repeat.)

And You are with me when I face difficult thing . (Kids repeat.)

My life can tell of Your wonder! (Kids repeat.)



Worship

Consider sharing some about the songs you are going to sing. What they mean, why we sing them, why they are meaningful and important to you!

"We're going to stand and sing together! One way that we show love to God is to worship through song! So stand up, sing loud, and join in the motions with us. God loves to hear us sing praises to Him! Let's stand together and sing!"

WORSHIP VIDEOS: My Help, Praise

God's Big Story

SLIDE: TITLE

Explain that the book is named after a Jewish man named Daniel who was exiled—or made to live far away from home—in Babylon. As Daniel obeys God, he (and his three friends) see God work in amazing ways!

"Let's start by watching part of God's big story directly from the Bible. Afterward, we will watch and experience more of the story!"

VIDEO: GODS BIG STORY



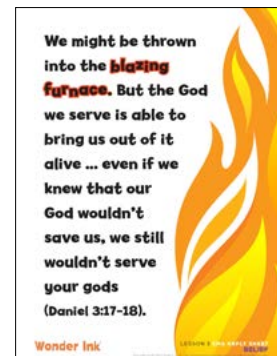
LESSON 3 THE FIERY FURNACE EXPERIENCE IT! SCRIPT

SUPPLIES: scissors (prep only), play dough (enough for each kid), cardstock (1 sheet per kid, optional), small bins (optional)

RESOURCES: SMA Reply Sheet (1 per SG)

Ahead of time, print the SMA Reply Sheet and instruct SG leader to keep it close. Set the play dough where you can easily hand it out to each kid. If your group is large, consider separating the play dough into smaller bins that you place throughout the room.

****Consider inviting a youth or extra volunteer to hide somewhere off /behind stage and come out as the angel when you get to the furnace part of the story.**



Make It Inclusive!

Some kids with sensory processing challenges may be averse to working with play dough. Consider having alternate mediums available, such as paper and crayons or small whiteboards and dry-erase markers. Or kids might prefer to act out their words or phrases.

Walk on stage, mashing a chunk of play dough in your hand as you talk. Begin making a crown or throne with the playdoh. **"Have you ever felt like hard things keep happening to you? Like you're this piece of play dough that keeps getting mashed and stretched and folded? Maybe you woke up late for school and felt rushed the rest of the day. Or maybe the bully on the bus showed up ... with friends. Or your parents are fighting ...again. Where is God when hard things happen? The good news is the Bible has a few things to say about that. As I tell you the story today, you are going to use your playdoh to create something from the story. It can be an object, character, number, letter, anything!**

Leader Tip: For Younger Kids. If you have a lot of younger kids, consider instructing leaders invite kids to work together as a group to make one item rather than each kid making her own.

In Jerusalem, the capital city of God's special people, the Jews, a terrible thing happened. It was conquered by a fierce and powerful people, called the Babylonians, and they made life difficult or the Jews. But God continued to be with His people, even when things were difficult. After conquering Jerusalem, the Babylonian leader, King Nebuchadnezzar (Neb-eh-kah-NEZ-er), chose some of the best and smartest young men from Jerusalem to serve him in Babylon.

Invite three volunteers to the stage area to play the parts of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

Shadrach (SHAD-rack), Meshach (MEE-shack), and Abednego (Uh-BED-neh-go) were part of the group chosen to serve the king. At this time, King Nebuchadnezzar had a giant gold statue made

Hold up your play-doh as an example of the statue they made of the king.

See, I made a _____ to signify the king! Let's continue.

Begin making something else from the story (Stick person to represent the angel is a good option.)

The king commanded everyone in the land, including those taken from Jerusalem, to worship the new statue by bowing down when they heard some special music play. If they chose not to worship the statue, they would be thrown into a blazing furnace. Talk about a hard thing!

It wasn't long after the king's announcement that everyone heard the special music.

It was time to worship the gold statue! Everyone began to bow down and worship the statue.

The music was playing, and everyone was bowing to the statue ... everyone, that is, except for three of the young men from Jerusalem—Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. They refused to bow down because God had told His people never to worship anyone or anything besides God.

Encourage the actors playing Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to stand on stage with their hands on their hips. When the people of Judah broke God's rule, they lost their homeland. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to make the same mistake again.

Others noticed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego's refusal to obey and reported them to the king. The king was furious that the young men wouldn't obey his command. So, he had the three men brought before him. "Is what I heard about you true?" the king asked them. "Don't you serve my gods? Don't you worship the gold statue I set up?" (Daniel 3:14). He reminded them that if they refused to bow down, they would be "thrown at once into a blazing furnace" (Daniel 3:15). The pressure to give in must have been so high! What do you think you would do if a king was threatening to throw you into fire?

But Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego stood their ground. They gave a powerful response. Let's look at the sheet in front of you and read it all together! (hold up the SMA Reply Sheet for the actors to read): "We might be thrown into the blazing furnace. But the God we serve is able to bring us out of it alive. ... Even if we knew that our God wouldn't save us, we still wouldn't serve your gods" (Daniel 3:17–18).

The king was enraged. He ordered his strongest soldiers to tie up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and to heat the furnace up seven times hotter than usual.

The king's soldiers threw Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego into the furnace. The heat was so strong that it killed the soldiers as they threw the three young men into the furnace.

If you have a volunteer playing the angel (see resources above,

But, when King Nebuchadnezzar looked into the furnace, he was shocked to see not three men in the five, but four!

"Didn't we tie up three men?" the king asked his advisers. "Didn't we throw three men into the

fire?" (Daniel 3:24). Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were walking around in the fire, and the fire wasn't harming them. King Nebuchadnezzar knew that someone more powerful than himself was with the young men. He shouted for them to come out of the furnace saying, "You who serve the Most High God, come here!" (Daniel 3:26).

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out of the furnace. Bring the three actors back to the stage. The fourth can return to his seat. **Not a hair on their heads was burned. They didn't even smell like smoke! The king respected these young men for trusting their God. They were willing to die instead of worshiping anything but God! King Nebuchadnezzar made a new law that the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego would be honored by everyone in his land, and he promoted the young men to higher positions. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego experienced firsthand that God is with us in difficult things."**

Thank your volunteer actors. Consider taking a moment to look at and admire kids' play dough creations before asking each group to combine and collect its play dough.

Connecting the Wonder Truth

SLIDE: WONDER TRUTH

Pose the following question to kids to help them connect the Wonder Truth to God's big story:

"Our Wonder Truth today is **GOD IS WITH US IN DIFFICULT THINGS. Where did you see our Wonder Truth in action in the story?"** Allow kids to answer freely.



Leader Tip: God sticks with us no matter what! Give kids a chance to stand up and stretch while remembering this truth! Have kids stand so one foot is in front of the other, bracing them to stand firm. Challenge them to lean forward as far as they can without moving their feet. Next, have them lean back as far as possible without moving. Then, have them do the same to the left and the right.

When Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were thrown into the fiery furnace, God showed them (and everyone watching!) that He is the God who saves. Many years later, Jesus died on the cross to save us from our sins—the wrong things we do. He is truly the God who saves!"

Responding in Worship

SLIDE: RESPONDING IN WORSHIP

Talk about ways we can respond to what we are learning with next steps such as tithing, prayer, asking questions, and worship. Encourage kids to ask their SG leaders any questions they were wondering during the lesson.

*****Introduce this next song and invite kids to respond and participate in worship. See the "Worship Posture Tutorial" on the RBKids Resource Page.**



WORSHIP VIDEO: Exalt Thee/I Speak Jesus

Blessing Your Kids

Speak this blessing over your kids, as a group or as individuals. Use your own words. Here is an example:

Blessing: You are not alone when you face difficult time . Your powerful, loving God is with you. He's beside you, going before you, always faithful. May you feel His love and find peace in His presence.

0:06:00
1
GWU THEME LOOP.mp4

God with Us

0:37:57
2
2GWU_30-second_countdown (1...

00:28

2:07:57
3
3GWU_2-minute_countdown (10...

01:58

4
Uh On Slide.png

Uh, oh!

5
Fiery Furnace Wonder Truth Sil...

God is with Us in Difficult Things

6
Fiery Furnace Welcome Questio...

What's something others might find hard, but you could teach them to do? Teach someone now!

5:07:85
7
7GWU_5-minute_countdown (10...

04:58

8
Fiery Furnace Declaration Slide...

Thank you, God, that You are good!
You made me on purpose, for a purpose.
And I am Your child.
You know me, love me, and send me.
You are with me when I'm scared, sad,
And You are with me when I'm difficult, though
I'm the son/child of Your wonder!

4:26:77
9
My Help - Motions.mp4

My Help - Motions.mp4

3:58:64
10
praise_-_motions_2024 (1080...

praise_-_motions_2024 (1080...

11
God With Us _1920x1080.png

God with Us

12
Fiery Furnace Title Slide.png

In God's Big Story:
The Fiery Furnace
Daniel 3

5:24:32
13
GWU Elem Gods Big Story L3....

Gods Big Story

14
God With Us _1920x1080.png

God with Us

15
Responding in Worship.png

Responding in Worship

4:27:27
16
I Exalt Thee - I Speak Jesus - ...

I Exalt Thee - I Speak Jesus - ...

0:06:00
17
GWU THEME LOOP.mp4

God with Us