

The Fiery Furnace

Summer • Lesson 6

Who?

Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, King Nebuchadnezzar, soldiers, angel

What?

Daniel's three friends did not pray to the king's statue, and they trusted God to care for them (Daniel 3)

When & Where?

During the sixth century B.C., in Babylon, where God's people were captives

Why?

To help children trust in God's care for them, no matter what happens



Teacher Challenge

Read Daniel 3.

How can this story make a difference in your own life and in the lives of the children you teach?

Daniel's three friends Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego had made the choice early on that they would be loyal to God and trust Him no matter what happened. These government officials chose to put their lives on the line and stand when everyone else bowed to Nebuchadnezzar's statue—even though they must have known how Nebuchadnezzar would respond.

Goals for each child

- 1 Identify a way God cared for Daniel's three friends
- 2 Name a place God cares for him or her
- 3 Thank God for His loving care

- When have you chosen to obey God in a frightening situation?
- What gave you confidence to do that?

Daniel's three friends had confidence in their powerful God. You, too, can know that your obedience presents God with the opportunity to work mighty things on your behalf, no matter how frightening the situation—when it seems that relationships, jobs or even lives are on the line. When a difficult situation confronts you, show that you love and trust God as you speak kindly, act justly and show love to others.

Bible Verse

“Love the Lord your God.”

Matthew 22:37

Prepare

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1 Play to Learn

20 - 30 minutes

Teachers guide small groups of children in one or more activities

Blocks Center

Build towers and talk about the tall statue a king built

Materials: Bible, small interlocking blocks

Music Center

Play musical instruments and talk about the actions of Daniel's friends

Materials: Bible, *Preschool Music #1* CD and player, rhythm instruments

Art Center

Create a box car and talk about places where God loves and cares for them

Materials: Bible, large cardboard box, markers, four paper plates, glue

Game Center

Search for the hidden cars and talk about places they go where God loves and cares for them

Materials: Bible, toy cars

2 Listen to Learn

10 - 15 minutes

One teacher leads this large-group time to guide children in hearing and understanding the Bible story and Bible verse

Come Together

Materials: None

Bible Verse

Materials: Bible, Activity Poster 2 from *Visual Resources*

Prayer

Materials: None

Song

Materials: *Preschool Music #1* CD and player

Puppet Time

Materials: Daffodil puppet

Bible Story

Materials: Bible, Figures 25-32 from *Visual Resources*, gold or gold-colored item, flannel board

3 Talk to Learn

15 minutes

Teachers guide small groups of children to complete *TalkTime* activity pages and other activities as time allows

TalkTime Activity Page

Materials: Bible, Lesson 6 *TalkTime* activity page and sticker page for yourself and each child, markers or crayons

Bible Story Game

Materials: Figures 25-32 from *Visual Resources*



- On *Preschool Music #1* CD, play "Come On In!" (track 1) as children arrive and "Are You Ready?" (track 15) during cleanup time

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Check off one
or more options for
each step of the lesson

Blocks Center

Collect

Bible, small interlocking blocks.

Do

Children stack blocks to build short and tall towers. Children compare heights of towers they build. Talk about the tall statue that the king made.



Teaching Tips

1. If you are using colored blocks, challenge older children to create color patterns as they build towers.
2. As children stack blocks, help them identify the concepts of short and tall by describing the towers. **Allie has lots of blocks in her tall tower. I only have two blocks in my short tower.**

Music Center

Collect

Bible, *Preschool Music #1* CD and player, rhythm instruments.

Do

Children play rhythm instruments as you play “Sing Praises” (track 16 on CD). When you stop the music, children trade instruments. Talk about how we can praise God and thank Him for His care—just like Daniel’s friends did.



Teaching Tip

Continue the game even if a few children are having a difficult time sharing the instruments. Recognize the children who are sharing. **Thank you, Preston, for sharing with Emma.**

Talk About

- **In our Bible story today, whenever the people heard special music, they were supposed to pray to a very tall statue. Daniel’s three friends did not pray to the statue. They prayed to God instead.**
- **Isabella, where do you like to go with your family? God loves and cares for you when you go to the ice-cream store.**
- **We can thank God for His loving care. We can say, “Thank You, God, for taking care of us wherever we go.”** Pray with children.

Tip for Younger Children

Children use cardboard blocks instead of interlocking blocks.

Tip for Younger Children

When you stop the music, children freeze. Continue playing without trading instruments.

Art Center

Collect

Bible, large cardboard box, markers, four paper plates, glue.

Do

Children decorate cardboard box to be a car. Children glue paper plates to the sides of the box to represent wheels. Children pretend to travel in car as they talk about places they like to go.



Teaching Tip

Children name places to travel to. Draw a simple picture representing each place. Display pictures in different parts of the room. Invite children to pretend to drive from one location to another.

Game Center

Collect

Bible, toy cars.

Prepare

Hide toy cars around the game area.

Do

Children search for toy cars. Once toy cars are found, children tell places they like to go. Repeat activity as time allows.

Teaching Tip

Children enjoy hiding the cars as much as they do finding them. Invite volunteers to hide cars for others to find.



Talk About

- Open your Bible to Matthew 22:37. **The Bible says, “Love the Lord your God.” God loves and cares for us wherever we go. We love God, and we’re glad He cares for us.**
- **Jessica, where do you like to play? God loves and cares for you when you play at the park. God cares for you wherever you go.**
- **Maria, where do you like to go in the car? God cares for you when you go to the store with your mom. God always loves you.**
- Pray briefly. **Thank You, God, for always loving us and caring for us. We love You, too. In Jesus’ name, amen.**

Tip for Younger Children

Attach wheels to large box prior to class. Invite children to draw on box car.

Tip for Younger Children

Help children find cars by giving them clues or by leading to the area of where the cars are hidden.

Listen to Learn

Large-Group Time

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Collect

Bible, Activity Poster 2 and Figures 25-32 from *Visual Resources*, *Preschool Music #1* CD and player, Daffodil puppet, gold or gold-colored item, flannel board, optional—*God's Story for Me* Bible storybook.

Come Together

Begin this activity as first children come to the area. Make a face demonstrating a feeling (surprised, sad, excited, worried, sleepy, scared, etc.) and ask children to imitate your face. As each feeling is demonstrated, invite children to name the feeling.

Bible Verse

Show Activity Poster 2. **Where are these people? What would you like to do if you were at the beach? God loves and cares for us at the beach! God loves and cares for us wherever we go.** Open your Bible to Matthew 22:37. **The Bible says, "Love the Lord your God."** Repeat Bible verse with children several times. **We know God loves us. We can show love to God. We can show love to God by praying to Him.**



Enrichment Idea

Say Bible verse, patting thighs as you say each word. Children do the motions along with you. Repeat, using different motions (stamping feet, patting shoulders, etc.) each time.

Prayer

Pray with children. **Dear God, thank You for loving us. Thank You for caring for us. We are glad for Your love. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Song

Let's sing about talking to God. Play "I Can Talk to God" (track 12 on CD) several times, inviting children to sing along with you.

Puppet Time

Use Daffodil puppet to perform the puppet script on the last page of this lesson.

Bible Story

Use gold or gold-colored item and Figures 25-32 to help tell the Bible story on the next page.



Tear out this Bible Tuck-In™ and place it in your Bible for class use.

Listen to Learn

The Fiery Furnace
Daniel 3

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Introduction

Show gold or gold-colored item. **This looks like it is made from gold. People use gold to make very special things. Listen to hear what happened when a king built a gold statue.** (Hold your Bible open to Daniel 3 as you tell the following story.)



The King's Statue

Daniel and his three friends worked for King Nebuchadnezzar. One day the king decided to make a big statue of himself. He wanted the statue to be covered with shiny gold. The statue was set up in a place where everyone could come and see it.

The king's messenger told the people, "When the music plays, bow and pray to this statue. If you do not bow, you will be thrown in a furnace and burned up!" (A furnace is like a big fireplace.)

But Daniel's three friends would not bow or pray to the big statue. They would only pray to God! The music began to play. Everyone else bowed low and prayed, but the three friends did not bow or pray. They stood tall. When King Nebuchadnezzar heard that the three friends had not bowed and prayed to his statue, he was angry!

The King's Furnace

The three friends were brought to the king. The king roared, "If you don't bow NOW, you'll be thrown into the furnace!"

The three friends said, "O king, we serve God. We will not worship the statue." That made the king even angrier!

God's Answer

The soldiers tied up the friends. Then the friends were thrown into the middle of the hot flames in the furnace. Then the king looked in the furnace. He saw the three friends walking safely in the middle of the hot, hot fire! And there was someone else in there, too. It was an angel! God had sent an angel to keep the three friends safe.

King Nebuchadnezzar was so surprised! Quickly, he shouted for the friends to come out of the fire. They did! They were not burned at all. They did not even smell like smoke! God had kept them safe!

King Nebuchadnezzar praised the one true God! He said, "From now on, no one may say anything bad about the one true God!"

Conclusion

Daniel's friends loved God. They knew that God always loved and cared for them, no matter where they were or what happened to them. We can love God, too. We can know that He will always love and care for us, no matter where we are or what happens to us. The Bible says, "Love the Lord your God."

(Optional: Review story by using pages 244-249 in *God's Story for Me* Bible storybook.)

Creative Bible Storytelling Idea

Use toy people to demonstrate the Bible story action.

TalkTime Activity Page

Collect

Bible, Lesson 6 *TalkTime* activity page and sticker page for yourself and each child, markers or crayons.

Do

Hand out *TalkTime* activity pages and demonstrate how to complete the page. Distribute sticker pages and crayons or markers. As children complete their own page, talk about the items on the page



Talk About

- What did the king want Daniel's three friends to do? What did they decide to do instead?
- The Bible says, "Love the Lord your God." The three friends loved God. And God loved them.
- What happened when the three friends were in the furnace? God loved and cared for the friends in the furnace. God kept them safe! God loves us, too. God takes care of us wherever we go.
- Thank You, God, for always loving and caring for us. Pray with children. In Jesus' name, amen.

Family FunTime Page

Show page 1 of *Family FunTime*, review the conversation suggestions, and give the papers to children to take home.

Bible Story Game

Collect

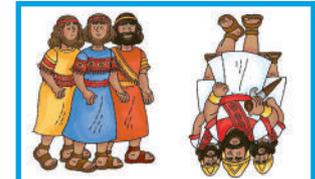
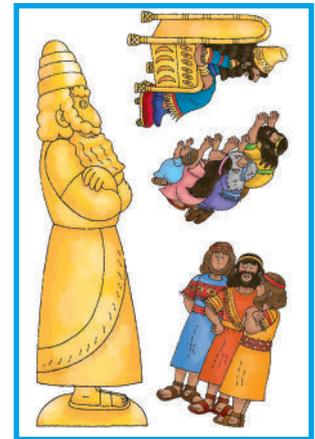
Figures 25-32 from *Visual Resources*.

Prepare

Hide storytelling figures around the room.

Do

Who was in our Bible story today? Follow me to find some pictures from our Bible story. Lead children in looking for figures. **Put your hand on your head when you see a picture from our story today.** After several children have spotted a picture, ask, **What do you see in this picture? What happened in this part of the story?**



Music Fun

During transition times, invite children to sing along as they listen to "I Can Talk to God" (track 12), "Come On In!" (track 1) and/or "Wave Good-Bye" (track 14) on *Preschool Music #1 CD*.

Puppet Script

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Scary Storm!

(Note: Play both parts, changing your voice for the puppet. Or you may have a helper play one of the parts.)

Daffodil: *(Enters and looks around before speaking in a whisper.)* Did you hear the storm last night?

Leader: Storm?

Daffodil: Yeah. There was thunder and lightning and wind that went “ooo.”

Leader: Hmm. I guess I missed it. I must have been sleeping.

Daffodil: I wasn't! I heard it all at my nest by the pond. It was scary!

Leader: It would be scary to be outside in a storm. What happened?

Daffodil: Well, there was a big flash of light. Then a big, loud BOOM!

Leader: That sounds like lightning and thunder.

Daffodil: Yep. I jumped up and ran into the bushes.

Leader: The bushes! Why did you go there?

Daffodil: I was scared!

Leader: Are the bushes safer than your nest?

Daffodil: I don't think so. It was scarier in the bushes. And the wind started to blow. It went “ooo, ooo.” Then rain started to fall.

Leader: Where was your mom?

Daffodil: She was by the nest, looking for me! She told me to come back to the nest where it was safe and dry.

Leader: So did you go?

Daffodil: Yep. Even though I got scared, I know I can always trust my mom!

Leader: That's good!

Daffodil: I crawled under my mom's wing. That's what little ducks like me are SUPPOSED to do in storms. My mom's wing is big and strong and safe and dry. Is your mom's wing like that, too?

Leader: My mom doesn't have a wing. She is a person, not a duck. But she can give good hugs!

Daffodil: Oh, hugs are nice!

Leader: Yes, they are! They help when we feel scared. I know that my mom loves and cares for me.

Daffodil: And my mom loves and cares for me, too!

Leader: *(To children.)* And someone else loves and cares for all of us, no matter what happens. Do you know who that someone is? *(Pauses for children to respond “God!”)*

Daffodil: I think the boys and girls are really smart!

Leader: I think so, too!

