



Faith in the Furnace

Workshop
Bible
Game
Zone
Grades 2-3



Workshop Overview

What You'll Do, What You'll Need



◆ Scripture Source

Daniel 1-3

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego trust and serve God, even though it leads them through the fiery furnace.

◆ Set the Course

Our mighty God can rescue us, no matter where we are. We resolve to serve only him, no matter what the circumstances.

◆ Bible Verse

"Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have [called] you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you.... When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned."
Isaiah 43:1b-2



1. Give kids an introduction to the story of Faith in the Fiery Furnace.

2. Use a kid-friendly version of the Bible to read the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego's adventure in the fiery furnace from Daniel Chapter 3.

___ Kid-friendly Bible version or paraphrase

3. Play an exciting game of "Holy Word Squares" to review the Bible story and help kids consider its application to their lives.

___ Large grid of nine poster board squares, three across and three down

___ Fun-Tak®

___ Nine "envelopes" made by folding 8 1/2 X 11" pieces of cardstock in half length-wise. Write the following titles on the envelopes: Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, King Nebuchadnezzar, Fiery Furnace, The Lord, Statue, Faith, History

___ Xs and Os cut from card stock and laminated

___ Questions from the list beginning on page 6 on half-sheets of paper to put in the envelopes

___ Prizes (optional)



Game Zone

Workshop Objectives

LEARNING TASKS

Kids will:

★ *hear the story of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego from a kid-friendly version of the Bible.*

(knowledge, comprehension, application; Verbal/Linguistic)

★ *play “Holy Word Squares” to reinforce the facts of the story and reflect upon the application of the story to their own lives.*

(knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis; Visual/Spatial, Verbal/Linguistic, Logical/Mathematical, Interpersonal)

SPIRITUAL FORMATION



Kids will:

★ *understand that like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, we can trust God to deliver us, but we need be faithful to serve God whether he intervenes on our behalf or not.*

(knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis)

★ *understand that we can trust God to be with us through any trial because he has promised to do so.*

(knowledge, comprehension, application)

★ *understand that it is important to be determined to do things God’s way, so that when temptations arise in our lives, we can be faithful to God and obey him.*

(knowledge, comprehension, application)

★ *understand that expressing our faith during trials and difficult circumstances gives others a chance to see God’s power and faithfulness.*

(knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis)





Year of Faith

Faith in the
Furnace

Daniel 1-3



“Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have [called] you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you... When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned.”

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Personal Preparation



From God's Heart to Yours



Read Daniel 1-3.

In 605 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar became King of Babylon. He swept into Palestine and captured Jerusalem, taking many of Jerusalem's wisest men and most beautiful women to Babylon as captives. Among this group were four young men—Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah—who found favor with the king and began to train for royal service.

Nebuchadnezzar attempted to force these young men to assimilate into the Babylonian culture and to transfer their loyalty from Judah's God to Babylon's many false gods. He first changed their names to Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego—names that glorified the false gods that the Babylonians worshiped. In order to influence their lifestyle, they were offered food and wine from the king's table, including meat that had been sacrificed to idols. Nebuchadnezzar also challenged the faith of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego by ordering them to bow down and worship a golden statue.

Faced with the trials of living in a culture that did not honor God, these friends stood together in their resolve to obey God in spite of any consequences obedience might bring. They refused the tainted food and ate vegetables and drank water instead, adjusting to the culture without abandoning their convictions. And when the Babylonians bowed to the image of gold, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego did the only thing that faithful believers in God could do. They disobeyed the king and suffered the consequence of being thrown into a blazing furnace.

These men did not know if God would rescue them from the fire, but they knew where they would draw the line. They would not bow down and worship any god but Yahweh. They knew God had power to deliver them, and they were determined to be faithful to him whether or not he intervened on their behalf.

We may never be in a jam as desperate as Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego's, but we will all face difficult times when our faith is tried. These times may be painful and may not turn out as we plan. Like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, we need be prepared to say, “If he rescues me, or if he doesn't, I will serve only God.”





◆ Introduction to Faith in the Furnace

Have the students sit on the floor in front of you.

Our story today takes place during a dark and difficult time in Israel's history. The king of Judah, King Zedekiah, was a wicked king. He did not honor the Lord or his laws. God grew increasingly angry at the evil this king brought to Jerusalem, so he allowed the Babylonians to defeat Judah.

One by one, the towns in Judah were captured by the Babylonians, until only Jerusalem, the capital, remained. Then Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem with his army, set up camp around the city, and laid siege to it for the next two years.

The people of Jerusalem were prisoners inside their own city. Since no one could go into or out of the city, it wasn't long before there was no food to eat and the people suffered greatly. As if that weren't bad enough, the Babylonian army broke through the walls and invaded the city. Then

Nebuchadnezzar gathered the survivors, including the craftsmen and young men and women of the nobility, and took them back to Babylon with him. However, he left some of the poorest people behind so that they could take care of the vineyards and plow the fields. Over 4,600 people were taken from Judah as captives to Babylon. This period in Israel's history is called their "exile."

Among those taken into exile were four young men about 15 or 16 years old. Their names were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. Daniel's name is probably familiar to you. The other three are better known as Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. For three years, these friends were trained to enter government service. But when things in Babylon went against the laws of Israel's God, these young men determined to remain loyal to the Lord. Listen closely as you hear how Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego made a difficult decision.



2

Bible Story

Read Daniel 3 from a kid-friendly version of the Bible, so the kids can hear the story straight from the source.

3


Holy Word Squares

- ★ From poster board, make nine squares and stick them to the wall or dry-erase board with Fun-Tak®. To each square, attach an envelope made from a sheet of card stock folded in half and labeled with one of the following titles: Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, King Nebuchadnezzar, Fiery Furnace, The Lord, Statue, Faith, and History.
 - ★ In each envelope, place three questions from the list below.
 - ★ Form two teams: Team X and Team O.
 - ★ Select a captain at random for each team. Perhaps choose the person whose birthday is the closest to today's date. The captain is the spokesperson for the team, but the team must confer to make decisions and answer questions.
 - ★ Flip a coin to decide which team will begin.
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Before playing, explain to the kids the object and rules of the game.

You want to be the first team to get three Xs or three Os in a row. The three Xs or Os can be horizontal, vertical or diagonal. Players earn the right to get their X or O on a square by correctly answering the question posed to them by the host. Opposing teams can "steal" the square if they answer a question correctly that the first team has answered incorrectly.

The first team will select a name from the board and the host will choose a question from that envelope. You heard all the answers to all the questions in the Bible reading and in what I told you at the beginning of class.



After the question is read, your team needs to talk over the answer. Then the team captain can tell your answer to the host. If your team answers correctly, you may place an X or O for your team on the board above the envelope.

Be sure to correct any incorrect answers given and add detail from the Scripture passage and introduction as necessary. Remember that the point of the game is the truth of the Word, not just the fun of competition. After Team 1 has a turn, repeat the process for Team 2.

If a team is trying to block the opposing team's efforts to get three in a row, they must say, "Shadrach (for example) for the block," indicating that they are blocking their opponent. If a team has one square left to win, they must say, "History (for example) for the win." After all of the squares have been played, if neither team has three in a row, the winning team is the one with the most Xs or Os on the board.

If time allows, you may play as many rounds as you have questions. Award prizes to both teams.

Questions for Holy Word Squares ---

Shadrach ---

- ◆ **What did Shadrach and his friends refuse to do?**
(Bow down and worship the statue.)
- ◆ **What did Shadrach believe God was powerful enough to do?**
(He believed God was powerful enough to rescue them from the furnace.)
- ◆ **What were Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego wearing when they got thrown into the furnace?**
(They were wearing robes, pants, turbans and other clothes.)

Meshach ---

- ◆ **What did Meshach and his friends say they wouldn't do even if God didn't rescue them from the fiery furnace?**
(They would still refuse to worship the statue or serve the gods of Babylon.)
- ◆ **Why wouldn't Meshach worship the statue?**
(Because he was determined to worship only God.)
- ◆ **What are some things we use to make ourselves seem important, other than letting people know that we're Christians?**
(Money, popularity, status symbols, fashion, grades, house size, etc.)



Abednego

- ◆ **What job did Abednego, Shadrach and Meshach have in Babylon?**
(They helped Daniel govern Babylon and the towns around it.)
- ◆ **What kinds of things would you refuse to do because you know they are not behaviors or attitudes that God would want in your life? Name at least 5.**
(Lying, stealing, bad language, drugs, pretending I'm not a Christian, being mean to kids at school, etc.)
- ◆ **What would you have done if you had been in the crowd that day? Would you have bowed down or refused? Explain your answer.**

King Nebuchadnezzar

- ◆ **How did King Nebuchadnezzar react when he found out that Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego had not worshiped the statue?**
(He was very angry and ordered them to be thrown into the fiery furnace.)
- ◆ **What made the king surprised when he looked into the fiery furnace?**
(Four people were walking around in the fire and they weren't tied up.)
- ◆ **What new law did the king make when Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego came out of the furnace unharmed?**
(No one could say anything bad about Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego's God or they would be cut into little pieces and their homes turned into piles of trash.)

Fiery Furnace

- ◆ **How much hotter than usual was the furnace heated before Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were thrown into it?**
(Seven times.)
- ◆ **What happened to the soldiers who were putting Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego into the furnace?**
(They were killed by the fire.)
- ◆ **What was the condition of the three friends when they came out of the furnace?**
(The fire had not burned them at all and they didn't even smell like smoke).

The Lord

- ◆ **Who was the fourth man in the furnace with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego?**

(An angel, Jesus.) Biblical scholars hold differing opinions on the heavenly visitor's exact identity.

- ◆ **What did God do to save Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego?**
(He protected them from the fire.)
- ◆ **How do you think other Jews who were captives reacted when they heard that God saved Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego? Explain your answer.**

🌀 Statue

- ◆ **What was the statue made of?**
(Gold.)
- ◆ **How big (tall and wide) was the statue?**
(90 feet tall and 9 feet wide.)
- ◆ **What was the signal for everyone to bow down and worship the statue?**
(Music was played.)

🌀 Faith

- ◆ **How does your faith help you when you are going through a difficult situation?**
- ◆ **What lesson about faith do you learn from this story?**
- ◆ **If God didn't rescue you from a scary situation, how would it affect your faith?**

🌀 History

- ◆ **Why did God allow the nation of Judah to be captured by the Babylonians?**
(The king of Judah did not honor God's laws and the nation had become very evil.)
- ◆ **What was the time called when the people of Israel lived in Babylon?**
(The exile.)
- ◆ **What made Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego determined to remain loyal to the Lord?**
(Food and practices in Babylon that went against the laws of God.)