

## **Lesson #4**

### **Shadrach, Meshach, & Abednego: Teens that stood for truth**

**Bible Story:** Three friends are thrown into the fiery furnace (Daniel 3)

**Life Focus:** We need to stand up for the truth and trust God no matter what.

**Kidspiration of the Week:** Jaylen Arnold, "Bullying No Way!"

**Memory Verse:** Nahum 1:7b

"The Lord protects us in times of trouble."

**Goals:** By the end of the session, the children should:

1. Discover that God wants us to stand up for the truth.
2. Realize that God wants us to trust Him in all circumstances.
3. Recognize that God always works for our good.

**Visual:** Week 4: Into the Fiery Furnace (See Poster Ring Set)

#### **Teacher Prep:**

Today we introduce the children to a few brave teenagers: Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. These young men refused to bow down to anything or anyone other than God. Although they were only between 15 and 19 years old, they had already lived very demanding and stressful lives. They had been taken away from their home and held captive in Babylon by King Nebuchadnezzar. When the King demanded that they bow down and worship a gold statue he had set up, they refused-knowing full well the consequences that faced them. These three boys knew God's commands and trusted God for protection, no matter what the circumstances looked like around them.

As we walk through life, we face challenges like Daniel and his 3 friends: Being tempted to idolize things or people other than God; taking the easy way out; or just trying to fit in with the world around us. But just like these young boys, we need to stand up for the truth-even when it puts us in uncomfortable situations. When our faith is tested, we must trust in the promises that God has made to us repeatedly in His Word. He offers us the protection and refuge we long for and promises that he is always working for our GOOD! Zechariah 13:9b tells us, "They will call on my name and I WILL answer them; I will say, 'They are my people,' and they will say, 'The LORD is our God.'"

## Welcome Activities and Bible Story Time

### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Bible (Place next to you or on display where children can see the source of the story)
- Lesson Introduction (2 containers of water and 2 oranges)
- Poster Set: Week 4: Into the Fiery Furnace and Kidspiration #4: Jaylen Arnold
- See “Reinforcing Activities” below for further optional materials needed

Before students come in, write on the chalkboard or display paper the memory verse: “The Lord protects us in times of trouble.” –Nahum 1:7b

### LESSON INTRO:

#### GOD PROTECTS US!

(Set up 2 similar containers and fill with water. In the first one, put a whole, unpeeled orange. In the second, put a whole peeled orange.)

*Just like when we put on sunscreen or a life jacket or a seat belt, God also gives us protection in life. God promises us that we can trust Him to keep us safe. Sometimes it may not look like we are safe, but God always works for our good! Even when things seem scary or sad, we can trust that God will use what is happening in our lives for good. Let’s look at these 2 oranges and pretend like they are us. One of these oranges still has the peel on the outside, that is like God’s protection over us. The other orange doesn’t have the peel anymore, so it is not protected. When we put both oranges in the water, the one with the peel floats on top of the water and stays protected from the water getting inside and making it all mushy. The orange without the peel sinks to the bottom of the container and immediately starts letting in the water. If this orange sits in the water long enough, it gets so mushy that it doesn’t even look like an orange anymore. So, just like this orange with the peel is protected, God protects us.*

### BIBLE STORY:

**\*OPTION 1 (Read with students following along in Extreme Faith Bibles, “fill in the blank” option available on the following page.)**

#### King Nebuchadnezzar’s Gold Statue

**3** King Nebuchadnezzar ordered a gold statue to be built ninety feet high and nine feet wide. He had it set up in Dura Valley near the city of Babylon, <sup>2</sup> and he commanded his governors, advisors, treasurers, judges, and his other officials to come from everywhere in his kingdom to the dedication of the statue. <sup>3</sup> So all of them came and stood in front of it.

<sup>4</sup> Then an official stood up and announced:

People of every nation and race, now listen to the king's command!<sup>5</sup> Trumpets, flutes, harps, and all other kinds of musical instruments will soon start playing. When you hear the music, you must bow down and worship the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. <sup>6</sup> Anyone who refuses will at once be thrown into a flaming furnace.

<sup>7</sup> As soon as the people heard the music, they bowed down and worshiped the gold statue that the king had set up.

<sup>8</sup> Some Babylonians used this as a chance to accuse the Jews to King Nebuchadnezzar. <sup>9</sup> They said, "Your Majesty, we hope you live forever!"<sup>10</sup> You commanded everyone to bow down and worship the gold statue when the music played. <sup>11</sup> And you said that anyone who did not bow down and worship it would be thrown into a flaming furnace. <sup>12</sup> Sir, you appointed three men to high positions in Babylon Province, but they have disobeyed you. Those Jews, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, refuse to worship your gods and the statue you have set up."

<sup>13</sup> King Nebuchadnezzar was furious. So he sent for the three young men and said, <sup>14</sup> "I hear that you refuse to worship my gods and the gold statue I have set up. <sup>15</sup> Now I am going to give you one more chance. If you bow down and worship the statue when you hear the music, everything will be all right. But if you don't, you will at once be thrown into a flaming furnace. No god can save you from me."

<sup>16</sup> The three men replied, "Your Majesty, we don't need to defend ourselves. <sup>17</sup> The God we worship can save us from you and your flaming furnace. <sup>18</sup> But even if he doesn't, we still won't worship your gods and the gold statue you have set up."

<sup>19</sup> Nebuchadnezzar's face twisted with anger at the three men. And he ordered the furnace to be heated seven times hotter than usual. <sup>20</sup> Next, he commanded some of his strongest soldiers to tie up the men and throw them into the flaming furnace.

<sup>21-23</sup> The king wanted it done at that very moment. So the soldiers tied up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and threw them into the flaming furnace with all of their clothes still on, including their turbans. The fire was so hot that flames leaped out and killed the soldiers.

<sup>24</sup> Suddenly the king jumped up and shouted, "Weren't only three men tied up and thrown into the fire?"

"Yes, Your Majesty," the people answered.

<sup>25</sup> "But I see four men walking around in the fire," the king replied. "None of them is tied up or harmed, and the fourth one looks like a god."<sup>[a]</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Nebuchadnezzar went closer to the flaming furnace and said to the three young men, "You servants of the Most High God, come out at once!"

They came out, <sup>27</sup> and the king's high officials, governors, and advisors all crowded around them. The men were not burned, their hair wasn't scorched, and their clothes didn't even smell like smoke. <sup>28</sup> King Nebuchadnezzar said:

Praise their God for sending an angel to rescue his servants! They trusted their God and refused to obey my commands. Yes, they chose to die rather than to worship or serve any god except their own. <sup>29</sup> And I won't allow people of any nation or race to say anything against their God. Anyone who does will be chopped up and their houses will be torn down, because no other god has such great power to save.

<sup>30</sup> After this happened, the king appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to even higher positions in Babylon Province.

## STUDENT COPY: King Nebuchadnezzar's Gold Statue

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**7** As soon as the people heard the music, they bowed down and worshiped the gold statue that the king had set up.

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Nebuchadnezzar. **9** They said, "Your Majesty, we hope you live forever!"**10** You commanded everyone to bow down and worship the gold statue when the music played. **11** And you said that anyone who did not bow down and worship it would be thrown into a flaming furnace. **12** Sir, you appointed three men to high positions in Babylon Province, but they have disobeyed you. Those Jews, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, \_\_\_\_\_ to worship your gods and the statue you have set up."

**13** King Nebuchadnezzar was furious. So he sent for the three young men and said, **14** "I hear that you refuse to worship my gods and the gold statue I have set up. **15** Now I am going to give you one more chance. If you bow down and worship the statue when you hear the music, everything will be all right. But if you don't, you will at once be thrown into a flaming furnace. No \_\_\_\_\_ can save you from me."

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Praise their \_\_\_\_\_ for sending an angel to rescue his servants! They trusted their God and refused to obey my commands. Yes, they chose to die rather than to worship or serve any god except their own. **29** And I won’t allow people of any nation or race to say anything against their God. Anyone who does will be chopped up and their houses will be torn down, because no other god has such great power to \_\_\_\_\_.

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**\*OPTION 2 (Students' Script to act out the story)**

**Reader's Theater Script Below for**

**"Shadrach, Meshach, & Abednego are Thrown into the Fiery Furnace"**

**Characters: (5 student parts total)- Narrator, Rack, Shack, Benny, King Neb  
(also have a few students to act as the soldiers- non speaking part)**

## **Student Script: "Shadrach, Meshach, & Abednego are Thrown into the Fiery Furnace"**

**NARRATOR:** *Hey there everyone! I'm here to tell you a story about 3 brave friends. Their names are Shadrach, Meshach, & Abednego. These 3 Hebrew friends lived under the rule of King Nebuchadnezzar in the land of Babylon. I know right... a lot of crazy names here. But don't worry, they all have nicknames. You can call the 3 friends...Rack, Shack, & Benny. And the King...well let's just call him King Neb.*

**RACK:** Hey Shack... Benny... did you guys hear?! King Neb just put a huge golden statue in the middle of the courtyard!

**SHACK:** *What?! King Neb is always doing these crazy things! What do you think he's up to this time?*

**BENNY:** *I don't know. But, I guess if we don't want to get in trouble, we better go and see what's going on.*

**RACK:** *You're right about that. If the King wants everyone there, we better go!*

*(Rack, Shack & Benny walk to the courtyard to see the big golden statue)*

**SHACK:** *Wow! King Neb sure is going all out this time...that thing is huge!*

**BENNY:** *I just heard one of the King's men say it was made of pure gold! Do you know how much money that must have taken to build!*

*(King Neb and his soldiers enter the courtyard, King Neb stands before the statue)*

**KING NEB:** *Here ye, Here ye. This statue has been built as an idol. I demand that all of you bow before this statue and worship!*

*(The soldiers all bow before the statue)*

**RACK:** *(Whispering to Shack and Benny) Guys, you know we can't bow down and worship this crazy statue. God has commanded us to only worship HIM!*

**SHACK:** *Ya, if we bow down, that would go against everything we stand for!*

**BENNY:** *Come on guys, we need to get out of here. I know King Neb is in charge, but we just can't do this!*

**NARRATOR:** *The 3 friends refused to bow down and worship this idol the King had built. When King Neb found out about this...he was furious! He ordered his guards to immediately bring Rack, Shack & Benny to him.*

**KING NEB:** *Is it true that you refuse to obey my command and bow before my statue? If you refuse me again, you will be thrown immediately into the furnace. Then what God will be able to rescue you from my hand?*

**RACK:** *King Neb, we won't defend ourselves on this matter. If we are thrown into the furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it.*

**SHACK:** *But even if He doesn't, we want you to know, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you built.*

**KING NEB:** *Take them away. Into the furnace they go!*

*(The soldiers throw Rack, Shack & Benny into the furnace with the King watching)*

**NARRATOR:** *Into the furnace the 3 friends did go. But the boys didn't burn up! God sent someone into the furnace to protect them from the heat and flames. The King watched in surprise as the boys didn't burn and suddenly he saw that there were now 4 people in there.*

**KING NEB:** *What?! There are 4 people in there! Come out! Come out right now, all of you!*

*(Rack, Shack & Benny walk out of the furnace)*

**KING NEB:** *Why... you don't have a burn on you! You don't even smell of smoke! How can this be?!*

**RACK, SHACK & BENNY:** *God has saved us all!*

**KING NEB:** *(Face the audience) Praise be to the God of these 3, who has sent an angel to rescue his servants! They trusted in him and did not obey the king's command. They were willing to give up their lives rather than serve or worship any god except their own God. I decree that no person say anything against their God...for no other god can save in this way!*



## **Kidspiration: Jaylen Arnold**

***Our Kidspiration of the week comes from Jaylen Arnold. (Hold up the Kidspiration Poster #4: Jaylen Arnold.) Jaylen is a young man on a mission! Jaylen used to get bullied at school. He experienced first-hand just how much bullying hurts. When he was just 8 years old, he decided to do something to stop others from being bullied. Jaylen started a non-profit called Jaylen's Challenge. For several years, Jaylen advertised against bullying by giving out wristbands that said, "Bullying No Way!" These wristbands helped students and teachers become aware of a very real bullying problem. Now, Jaylen goes around to different schools and speaks at assemblies; telling his story and how much bullying hurts people. He has given a voice to many other students that were too afraid to speak up and tell someone they were being bullied. His anti-bullying campaign spread quickly and his message is now being spread across the country. Like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, Jaylen stood up for what was right. We too, should always say, "Bullying, No Way!"***

### **APPLICATION QUESTIONS:**

(Please remember, Kids For Christ is a non-denominational organization. Please follow these questions so that denominational discussion does not develop.)

- 1. *Why did Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refuse to obey the king, even though they knew it meant being thrown into the furnace?***
  - a. They knew that God wants us to worship Him only.
  - b. They trusted God and knew, because they were doing the right thing, God would protect them.
- 2. *Have you ever seen someone get bullied? What did you do about it?***
  - a. Answers will vary.
  - b. God tells us that we should stand up against evil and He will protect us and be our refuge and strength. We should always be ready and willing to stand up and do the right thing, knowing that God will protect us. Bullying is always wrong.
- 3. *What does the Bible say about God's protection? (Have students look up the following verses)***
  - a. Examples to look up and discuss include: Deuteronomy 31:6, Isaiah 41: 10, Psalm 34: 19, 2 Samuel 22: 3, Psalm 23, Romans 8:28, Jeremiah 29:11

## **REINFORCING (OPTIONAL) ACTIVITIES:**

1. "Fire Cup Knock Down": (Materials Needed: 3-6 plastic cups and printed fire clip art- attached or color option available online) Cut out the fire clip art and tape to cups. Stack cups pyramid style and have students take turns throwing balls of paper to knock the fire cups down.
2. "Game Ideas that Reinforce Cooperation"
  - a. Card Relay Race: (Materials Needed: Deck of cards) Split into 4 teams by suit (hearts, diamonds, spades, clubs) Give each of the captains the ace of their suit. Put all the other cards randomly in a circle on the other side of the room. Have students run a relay race, picking up only 1 card at a time of their own suit. If the card they first touched is not in their suit, they must put the card back in the circle and go back to the end of their line. Continue until all cards of each suit have been gathered and placed in the correct order.
3. "Take Home Talk": (Materials Needed: Copies and Markers/Crayons) Into the Fiery Furnace Word Scramble (attached).
4. "Challenge of the Week": Challenge the students to remember this week's memory verse in their daily prayer time- thanking God for His protection over our lives.

## **CLOSING PRAYER:**

***God, thank you for teaching us about Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego and Jaylen. Thank you for loving and protecting us. Help us to remember that no matter what is happening in our life, you will always be working for our good. Amen.***

Lesson Teacher Notes: All lessons would be a great bridge to the gospel message. If you bridge into the gospel message, please be mindful of the Kids For Christ non-denominational policy. Remember the children in your class will have a variety of church backgrounds or perhaps no biblical background at all. Any questions or comments from the children which have a denominational subject matter needs to have the following response from you: "That would be a good question to discuss with your family." Also after the gospel message is presented please follow up with this sentence: "Going to Church, praying, reading your bible, and baptism are all good things, and you can talk to your family about these things too."



## **Into the fiery furnace they go!**

Unscramble the words in the anagram below.  
Use your bibles to check back in the story for help!



aabckeehnnruzz \_\_\_\_\_

aesttu \_\_\_\_\_

hioprsw \_\_\_\_\_

acefnru \_\_\_\_\_

fhortu \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Answer Key:**

- 1) Nebuchadnezzar**
- 2) Statue**
- 3) Worship**
- 4) Furnace**
- 5) Fourth**
- 6) Unharmed**
- 7) Angel**
- 8) Bowed**
- 9) Trust**
- 10) Miracle**