

Long ago, the nation of Israel was captured by the Babylonians. Many people were carried off to serve their new leaders. They were given new names, new identities, new jobs, and told to forget about their people, their homeland, and their God.

Three of those captives were re-named Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. They were smart and strong—the pride of their families! I can imagine that when they were growing up, Shadrach’s mother bragged about her son all over. Meshach’s dad hung his art projects on the wall. Abednego’s aunties would pinch his cheeks. I can imagine them in line at school, learning about following God. At awards night, there would be plenty for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

But now these young men had been taken away from their homes to be trained to serve the king of Babylon. I’m sure Shadrach missed his mom, and Meshach was too sad to paint, and Abednego stared at his strange new haircut in the mirror.

Another new thing was that this country worshipped lots of gods. This king, called Nebuchadnezzar, decided that everyone should worship a gold statue that he made. He decreed that whenever the instruments played, everyone had to fling themselves on the ground and worship at his giant golden statue’s feet.

Our guys didn’t leave everything behind when they were taken from home—they brought their faith in the one true God. They had confidence that God was with them even in this strange place. So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to worship the statue. I’m sure they were fairly quiet about it. Shadrach probably stood still and straight. Meshach might have folded his arms in the Hebrew way of prayer. And Abednego might have closed his eyes.

But King Nebuchadnezzar was told that these three guys didn’t worship his statue—and he got mad! He ordered them brought before him and he questioned them. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were polite. They didn’t try to hurt the king. They just explained that they could not worship the gold statue. They would only worship God. No matter what.

This made the king so furious that he commanded his men to throw them into the fiery furnace. He told the furnace people to turn the heat all the way to EXTREME. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were tied up and tossed in.

Then the King looked into the furnace, hoping to see Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego withering into nothingness. But instead he got the shock of his life. (Make a very shocked face and prompt the kids to mimic you.) Not only were the men still standing, but they weren’t burning up. They were walking around, and they weren’t tied up. And NOT ONLY THAT, a totally new person walked around with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego! THERE WERE FOUR IN THE FURNACE!

The king immediately called for the men’s release, and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were brought out. They weren’t burned up or singed. They had all their eyebrows, and their clothes smelled like a fresh summer’s day instead of burnt garbage.

Then and there, the king pardoned them and declared that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego’s God was the one true God. He had been with them in the fire, and He had saved them.

What to Do:

Print one for each small group.

“Signature Moves! Story” Activity Page

July 2021, Week 1, K-5 Starter
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It's the middle of the night, and you hear a huge crack of thunder! You jump out of bed and drag your covers into your closet. You're really scared of thunderstorms! How can you show you trust that God is with you in your hideout?

Your friend wants to go to a game website that you know you're not allowed to go on. He's really talking it up, and he's calling you a baby for not making a new account and going on. How can you show that you trust God is with you?

You're in the back seat of the car, all excited to get to the beach, when suddenly your parents pull over. There's some kind of problem with the car, and you have to wait until a tow truck arrives. Your parents have an unhappy discussion about how much this will cost. How do you show that you trust God is with you on that highway?

Have you ever felt pressured to do something wrong, just like the three friends in our story? No matter what you did in real life, how could you have shown trust that God was with you, even when you felt unsettled?

You face a full garage—no actually, it's a mountain hidden in a garage! Your great-aunt is moving into a smaller house and your parents have volunteered you to help clean out her place before the move. You are pretty sure you will graduate high school before you finish this job. That's how big it is! How do you show that you trust God is with you as you grab the broom and trash bags?

Your dad gave you money to pay for the field trip at school. You've checked your pocket about 87 times on the way in to make sure it's still there. But when you go to turn it in to your teacher, you can't find it! You feel panicked and frantic! How can you trust that God is still with you?

Someone cut in front of you in line for the ice cream truck. The nerve of that kid! Then he bought the last Choco Taco®! How can you trust that God is with you then as you order your plain ice cream?

Someone you love is sick, and you don't know what to do. Everyone seems worried. How can you trust that God is with you?

Your best friend is moving super far away. They won't even have internet or phone for a while. You watch the moving truck leave their house, and you feel so alone. How can you trust that God is with you?

Your oldest, bossiest cousin is babysitting, and her rules are so unfair! She didn't let you have a snack, won't let you use the TV or game console, and has made you go play outside even though none of your friends are around. How can you trust God is still with you?

Your neighbor asks you to help her carry her laundry up the stairs as she wrestles her baby's stroller up all four flights. You don't want to admit that you're afraid of the basement laundry room, but you know that helping her is the right thing to do. You take a deep breath and face the basement stairs. How do you show that you trust God is with you?

You come in from playing outside, and you're SO hungry! You see a giant plate of brownies on the table, and you know they're for your mom's book club later. No one else is around, and the only other snack in sight is a mushy apple. How do you show you know God is with you?

What to Do:

Print on paper and cut apart. Provide one set for each small group.

"Hot Hop Scenarios" Activity Page

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