

# Leader BIBLE STUDY

Nebuchadnezzar built a tall gold statue and issued a new law: “When you hear music, you are to fall down and worship the statue.” The penalty for defying this law was severe. “Whoever does not fall down and worship will immediately be thrown into a furnace of blazing fire” (Dan. 3:6).

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So when the music played, all the people bowed down and worshiped the gold statue. Well, almost everyone. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to bow down and worship the statue. They loved and worshiped the one true God. Only He was worthy of their worship.

The Book of Daniel says that the Chaldeans—a group of astrologers and dream interpreters—took this opportunity to go to the king and tell on Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. (Dan. 3:8,12) But not even the threat of death in a furnace of blazing fire could convince the three friends to renounce their loyalty to God. They boldly declared that God had the power to save them, and even if He chose not to, they would not worship the king’s statue.

Consider the possibilities. God could keep the friends from being thrown into the furnace. Or, once in the furnace, God could keep them from being harmed. And if they perished, God would receive them into heaven. Their trust in God enabled them to stand firm even as they were tied up and thrown into the fire.

Then something miraculous happened. Nebuchadnezzar saw four men in the fire! They were walking around, unharmed! The Lord not only rescued Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, He was with them. King Nebuchadnezzar praised God and issued a decree forbidding anyone to say anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

On the cross, people mocked Jesus: “He saved others; He cannot save Himself!” (Mark 15:31). Jesus was not physically unable to save Himself. He chose to do His Father’s will. His love for sinners kept Him there. Jesus did not save Himself *so that* He could save others.

# Younger Kids BIBLE STUDY OVERVIEW

**Session Title:** Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego

**Bible Passage:** Daniel 3

**Big Picture Question:** Who was with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego?

God was with them in the fire.

**Key Passage:** Daniel 6:27

**Unit Christ Connection:** Despite captivity, God used faithful people to continue His plan to provide salvation through Jesus Christ.

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## Small Group Opening

Welcome time

Activity page (5 minutes)

Session starter (10 minutes)

## Large Group Leader

Countdown

Introduce the session (1 minute)

Timeline map (1 minute)

Big picture question (1 minute)

Sing (5 minutes)

Key passage (4 minutes)

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Discussion starter video (3 minutes)

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me (optional)

Prayer (5 minutes)

## Small Group Leader

Key passage activity (5 minutes)

Bible story review (10 minutes)

Activity choice (10 minutes)

Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

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# THE BIBLE STORY

## Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego

### *Daniel 3*

**Nebuchadnezzar** (NEB yoo kad NEZ uhr) was the king of Babylon. He did not worship God; he worshiped false gods. Nebuchadnezzar made a tall statue out of gold. It was about as tall as a nine-story building! The statue stood in Babylon where everyone could see it. **King Nebuchadnezzar called for all of the important officials in Babylon to come and stand around the new statue.**

**Then one of the king's heralds made an important announcement: "When you hear the sound of music, you must fall down and worship this gold statue. Anyone who does not obey this rule will be thrown into a fiery furnace!"**

The rule was for everyone in Babylon. So when the people heard the sound of music, they fell down and worshiped the gold statue like the king commanded. But not everyone bowed down and worshiped the statue. **Three men from Judah—who had been renamed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego—refused to bow down to a statue.**

**Some men went to King Nebuchadnezzar to complain about Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.** They did not like these men from Judah who did not obey their king.

"You have made a rule for all the people," they reminded the king. **"But some of the men from Judah do not bow down and worship your statue."**

**This news made King Nebuchadnezzar angry! He called for the men. "Shadrach! Meshach! Abednego! Come here!"** Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego stood before the king. He asked them, **"Is it true that you do not serve my gods or worship the gold statue I set up? If you do not bow down when you hear the music, I will throw you into a fiery furnace! Then what god could rescue you from my power?"**

**The three friends answered, "King, we don't need to answer your question. If the God we serve exists, He can rescue us from the fiery furnace. He can save us from you. But even if God chooses not to rescue us, we won't serve your gods. And we won't bow down and**

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worship the gold statue.”

**King Nebuchadnezzar was angrier than ever! The furnace was already very hot, but King Nebuchadnezzar ordered his workers to make it seven times hotter! He told the strongest soldiers in his army to come and tie up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and throw them into the fiery furnace.** The furnace was so hot that the strong soldiers died when they threw in the three friends. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego fell into the furnace all tied up.

**Suddenly, King Nebuchadnezzar jumped to his feet. “Didn’t we tie up three men and throw them into the fire?”**

**“Yes, King,” his advisers said.**

**“Look!” the king shouted. “I see four men walking around in the fire. They aren’t tied up, and they aren’t hurt! The fourth man looks like an angel!”**

**Nebuchadnezzar quickly went to the door of the furnace. He called out, “Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego—servants of the Most High God! Come here!”**

**So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out of the fire.** The king and all his officials looked at them. **They had not been hurt by the fire at all!** Their bodies were not burned, their hair was not burned, and their robes were not burned. **They didn’t even smell like they had been near a fire!**

**Nebuchadnezzar praised God.** “The God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego sent an angel and rescued His servants! They trusted in Him—they were willing to die for Him—and He saved them!”

**King Nebuchadnezzar made a new law for all the people. “Anyone who says anything against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego’s God will be punished! No other god can save people like this!” Then the king gave Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego even more important jobs in the kingdom of Babylon.**

*Christ Connection: Only God could rescue Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from the fire. Jesus is the only One who can save us from our sin. Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross provided the way for us to be rescued and have eternal life.*



# Small Group OPENING

**Session Title:** Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego

**Bible Passage:** Daniel 3

**Big Picture Question:** Who was with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego?  
God was with them in the fire.

**Key Passage:** Daniel 6:27

**Unit Christ Connection:** Despite captivity, God used faithful people to continue His plan to provide salvation through Jesus Christ.

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## Welcome time

- play dough

**Arriving Activity:** Play dough statue

Give each child play dough and invite him to create a statue. If kids struggle, allow them to create whatever they wish.

**Say** • Would you ever think of worshiping what you just made? Of course not! The people who lived in Babylon during Daniel's captivity did. We'll see what happened when Daniel's friends were told they must worship a statue instead of the one true God.

## Activity page (5 minutes)

- "Key Clues" activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils

Guide boys and girls to complete the activity page.

**Say** • Each word you unscrambled is part of today's Bible story. Listen and see if you can find each one.

## Session starter (10 minutes)

**Option 1:** Music freeze

Provide simple movement commands for the kids, such as do jumping jacks, hop on one foot, jog in place, give high fives, and so forth. When they hear the music play, all the kids must freeze in their current position until the



- music

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music stops. Once the music stops, they must immediately continue the command they were given. Invite a leader or another kid to start and stop the music. Play as time allows.

**Say** • In today's Bible story, the people in Babylon were asked to stop whatever they were doing when they heard music and worship a golden statue. Do you think everyone did? We'll find out in a few moments.

### **Option 2: The rescuer**

- construction paper, 1 per kid with no more than 3 of the same color
- tape

Make a circle of construction paper with enough pieces for each kid to stand on one, but only three of the same color.

Tape the pieces of paper to the floor to prevent slipping.

Invite the kids to march around the circle until commanded to stop. Once they stop, call out one of the colors. The kids on that color should face away from the remaining kids.

Secretly choose one of the kids on another color to be the rescuer. Make sure those standing on the chosen color don't know who it is. Invite the three to face the kids and ask one question before guessing who the rescuer is. They might ask, "Is it a boy or girl?" or "Is the rescuer wearing blue?" If they guess correctly, they remain in the game. If not, they sit out two rounds.

**Say** • Each of you had to identify the right person as your rescuer. In today's story, three of God's people stood beside their rescuer.

## **Transition to large group**

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# Large Group LEADER

**Session Title:** Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego

**Bible Passage:** Daniel 3

**Big Picture Question:** Who was with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego?  
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## Countdown

- countdown video

Show the countdown video as your kids arrive, and set it to end as large group time begins.

## Introduce the session (1 minute)

- rope
- garden hose
- plastic hard hat
- inflatable swim ring

*[Large group leader enters carrying a rope, garden hose, plastic hard hat, and an inflatable swim ring.]*

**Leader** • Hello, it's good to see the training crew again.

You may remember me. I'm Rescue Ray. A call just came into headquarters. A fire started just outside of town. Help is on the way. Since you are continuing your rescue training, which of these items would you use to put out a fire? Of course, the garden hose! Thanks! When you go to a fire, you never know when someone might need to be rescued. That reminds me of another rescue story from the Bible.

## Timeline map (1 minute)

- Timeline Map

**Leader** • Last week, we saw how Daniel and his three friends were rescued from eating food God told His people not to eat. Even though they were held captive in Babylon, God was still taking care of them. ***What did***

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***Daniel do in captivity? Daniel remained faithful to God.***

God blessed them. Even though Daniel and his friends ate different foods than the king ordered, they turned out healthier and smarter than all the people in Babylon.

In this week's story, Daniel's three friends found themselves in need of rescuing from a very hot fire. Can you find three people close to a big fire on our timeline map? There they are! Today's Bible story is about Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

### **Big picture question (1 minute)**

**Leader** • Now that we know our Bible story, let's see our big picture question. We'll need the Bible and some good listeners to figure out the answer. Who has a Bible ready to go? Awesome. The question is, ***Who was with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego?***

### **Sing (5 minutes)**

- "You Are I Am" song

**Leader** • It turns out Daniel's friends were not alone in the fire. Did you know that those who trust in Jesus are never alone either? We may not always feel like God is with us but He is. Isn't that what our theme song says? Let's sing it together.

Sing together "You Are I Am."

### **Key passage (4 minutes)**

- Key Passage Slide or Poster
- "He Rescues and Delivers" song

**Leader** • Many stories in the Bible show us how God rescues His people and delivers them from all kinds of situations. Our key passage reminds us that no situation is too big for God.

Show the slide or poster of the unit's key passage, Daniel 6:27. Lead the boys and girls to read the verse aloud. Sing together "He Rescues and Delivers."

- “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego” video
- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Bible Story Picture Slide or Poster

## Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

**Leader** • Let’s find Daniel 3 in our Bibles. We will soon be able to answer the question, ***Who was with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego?***

Show the “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego” video, or choose to tell the Bible story in your own words using the script provided. For a shorter version of the story, read only the bolded text.

**Leader** • Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego faced another challenge. Even if it meant losing their lives, they were not going to worship a useless statue. They knew whom they should worship—the one true God. King Nebuchadnezzar couldn’t believe what he was seeing in the fire. They had put three people in the fire, but he saw a fourth person in the fire too. ***Who was with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego? God was with them in the fire.*** The king recognized that only God could rescue them. Nebuchadnezzar proclaimed that no other god can save like the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

Ask the following review questions:

1. What did King Nebuchadnezzar build that the people were supposed to worship? (*a gold statue, Daniel 3:1*)
2. When were the people supposed to bow and worship the statue? (*when they heard music, Daniel 3:4-7*)
3. What happened to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego when they refused to obey the king? (*They were thrown in a hot, fiery furnace; Daniel 3:19-20*)
4. What did the king see in the fire? (*Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, plus a fourth person; Daniel 3:24-25*)

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5. *Who was with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego? God was with them in the fire.*

- “Unit 19 Session 2” discussion starter video

**Discussion starter video (3 minutes)**

**Leader** • Have you ever been asked to do something you knew was wrong? Maybe it was something like this. Show the “Unit 19 Session 2” video.

**Leader** • Can anyone share a time you were asked to do something you knew was wrong? If you haven’t faced a time like that, you eventually will. If you have repented and placed your trust in Jesus, you can know He is with you during those times. *Who was with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego? God was with them in the fire.* Only God could rescue Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Only Jesus can rescue us from sin. When we repent and trust Him, our sins are forgiven, and Jesus will never leave us.

**The Gospel: God’s Plan for Me (optional)**

Use Scripture and the guide provided with this session to explain to boys and girls how to become a Christian. Assign individuals to meet with kids who have more questions. If this is not possible, encourage boys and girls to ask their parents, small group leaders, or other Christian adults any questions they may have about becoming a Christian.

- Big Picture Question Slide or Poster
- paper wad or ball

**Prayer (5 minutes)**

Show the big picture question slide or poster.

**Leader** • Let’s see who found the answer to our big picture question, *Who was with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego? God was with them in the fire.*

Play “Hot Potato” using a ball or paper wad. Allow kids to pass it while playing music. When the music stops, the

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kid holding the ball or paper wad must say the big picture question and answer. If you don't have music, let the kids pass the object until you give the command "hot."

Before transitioning to small group, make any necessary announcements. Lead the kids in prayer. Pray, thanking God for never leaving those who trust in Him.

## **Dismiss to small groups**

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## The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.

**God rules.** Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.

**We sinned.** Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)

**God provided.** Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

**Jesus gives.** Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.

**We respond.** Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus.



# Small Group LEADER

**Session Title:** Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego

**Bible Passage:** Daniel 3

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## Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Slide or Poster
- dry erase board and markers (optional)
- paper wad

Make sure the key passage, Daniel 6:27, is visible for each child, either as the printed poster or written on a dry erase board. Read the verse together.

**Say** • God rescued and delivered Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in such a way that even the Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar, knew only the real God could save someone from a fiery furnace. Let's work on memorizing our key passage.

Invite the kids to form a circle and pass a paper wad around the circle. The first kid with the paper wad should say the first word, the next kid should say the second word, and so forth until the key passage is complete. Play as time allows.

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Small Group Visual Pack
- Big Picture Question Slide or Poster
- red, orange, or yellow construction paper, 4 pieces
- scissors
- tape

## Bible story review (10 minutes)

Encourage the kids to find Daniel 3 in their Bibles. Help them as needed.

**Say** • Is Daniel found in the Old Testament or New Testament? (*Old Testament*) In which division of the Bible can you find Daniel? (*Major Prophets*) Where were most of God's people living when Daniel prophesied? (*Babylon*)

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Use the small group visual pack to show kids where today's Bible story is on the timeline. Review the Bible story provided using the bolded text, or summarize the story in your own words.

Before the session, create "flames" by folding one end of a piece of construction paper and cutting the other end to look like flames. Tape the folded end to the floor so the flames stick up. Create another set of flames and tape it beside the first. Do the same about 10 feet away.

Invite the kids to line up single file behind one of the flames. Invite them to jump the first flame, run through the fire (the space between the flames), and jump the last flame while you read or review the story. Once each kid runs through the fire, she should immediately go back to the end of the line in order to do it again. Whoever is between the flames when the storyteller says "fire" or "furnace" must sit out. The winners are the ones still in the game at the end of the review.

**Say** • King Nebuchadnezzar wanted everyone to believe that his statue was worthy of worship. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego knew that wasn't true. Only God deserves to be worshiped. The three friends didn't know if God would choose to save them, but they knew God could save them. They trusted God no matter what happened, and God rescued them.

Show the big picture question slide or poster.

**Say** • *Who was with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego? God was with them in the fire.* God had a rescue plan for us too. He sent Jesus, the only One who could save us from our sins.

## Activity choice (10 minutes)

### Option 1: Fire stories



- Bible, 1 per kid
- Timeline Map (optional)

Provide the kids with the following verses one at a time: Exodus 3:2; Leviticus 1:7; 1 Kings 18:38; Jeremiah 36:23; Daniel 3:25. Each one involves fire and are former stories covered in The Gospel Project. See who can find the book and verse the fastest. Let that kid read the verse. Then, see who can tell something about the story where that verse is found. If the kids need a hint, each of these stories can be located on the timeline or small group visual pack. Each Bible story picture contains fire.

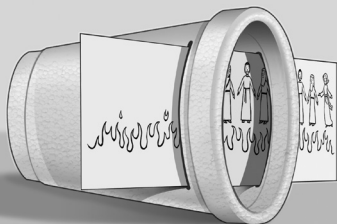
**Say** • God is in control of everything, even fire. In today's Bible story, who did God protect from the fire? He protected Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. ***Who was with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego? God was with them in the fire.***

### Option 2: Cup viewer

- "Movie Strip" printable
- knife
- foam cups, 1 per kid
- crayons or markers

Before the session begins, use a sharp knife to cut a slit slightly larger than 2 inches just under the lip on top of the cup. Make another 2-inch slit on the opposite side of the cup under the same lip. Repeat for each kid. Invite the kids to color one strip of paper from the "Movie Strip" printable. Demonstrate how to run the strip of paper through the slits of the cup. Then they can move the strip back and forth through each scene.

**Say** • You just created a small movie of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego as they went into the fiery furnace. They were not alone though. ***Who was with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego? God was with them in the fire.***



- journals
- Journal Page, 1 per kid
- markers or crayons
- Bible Story Coloring Page

## Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute each child's journal and the journal page provided with this session. Instruct the kids to draw a picture of Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, and a fourth person in the fiery furnace. Writers can write the big picture question and answer.

**Say** • What is the answer to the big picture question, ***Who was with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego? God was with them in the fire.***

Make sure each child puts this week's sheet in the journal, and then collect them. Keep the journals in the classroom so they will be available every week or as often as you wish to use them.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the coloring page provided with this session. Pray, thanking God for protecting His people in difficult times. Pray for each child by name, asking God to help each kid trust Him in difficult times.

## Daniel

**Key Passage:** Daniel 6:27

**Session 1:** Daniel and His Friends Obeyed God  
*Daniel 1*

**Session 2:** Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego  
*Daniel 3*

**Session 3:** God Gave Daniel Wisdom  
*Daniel 5*

**Session 4:** Daniel Was Rescued from the Lions  
*Daniel 6*





**He delivers and rescues,  
And He works signs  
and wonders  
In heaven and on earth,  
Who has delivered Daniel  
from the power of the lions.**

**Daniel 6:27**



**“He rescues and he saves;  
he performs signs and  
wonders in the heavens and  
on the earth. He has rescued  
Daniel from the power  
of the lions.”**

**Daniel 6:27**



**He delivereth and  
rescueth, and he worketh  
signs and wonders in  
heaven and in earth, who  
hath delivered Daniel from  
the power of the lions.**

**Daniel 6:27**



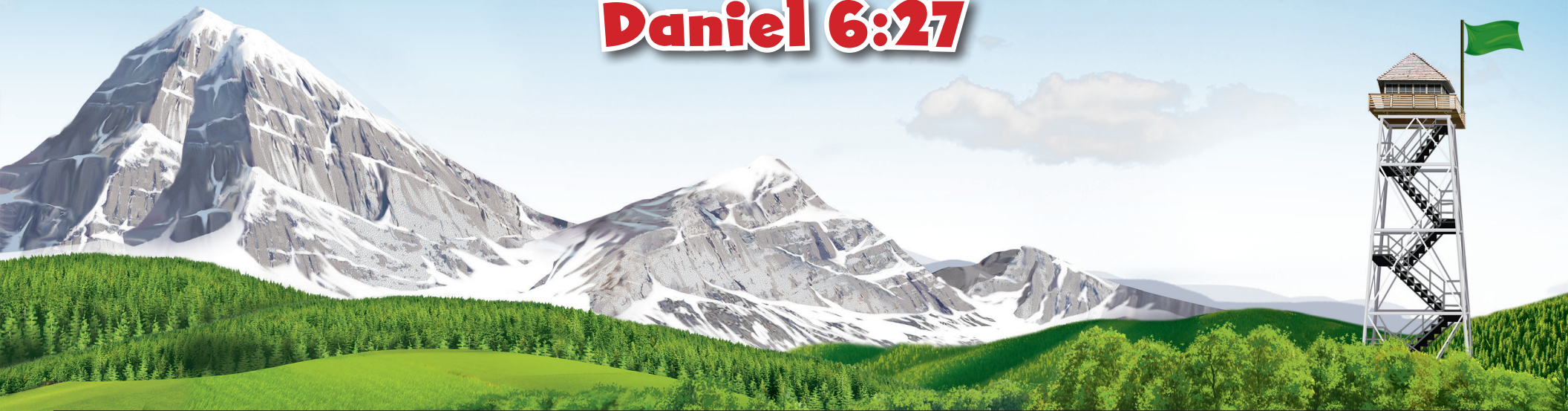
**“He rescues and delivers;  
He performs signs and  
wonders in the heavens and  
on the earth, for He has  
rescued Daniel from the  
power of the lions.”**

**Daniel 6:27**



**“He delivers and rescues;  
he works signs and wonders  
in heaven and on earth, he  
who has saved Daniel from  
the power of the lions.”**

**Daniel 6:27**









**Who was with  
Shadrach, Meshach,  
and Abednego?**

**God was with them  
in the fire.**

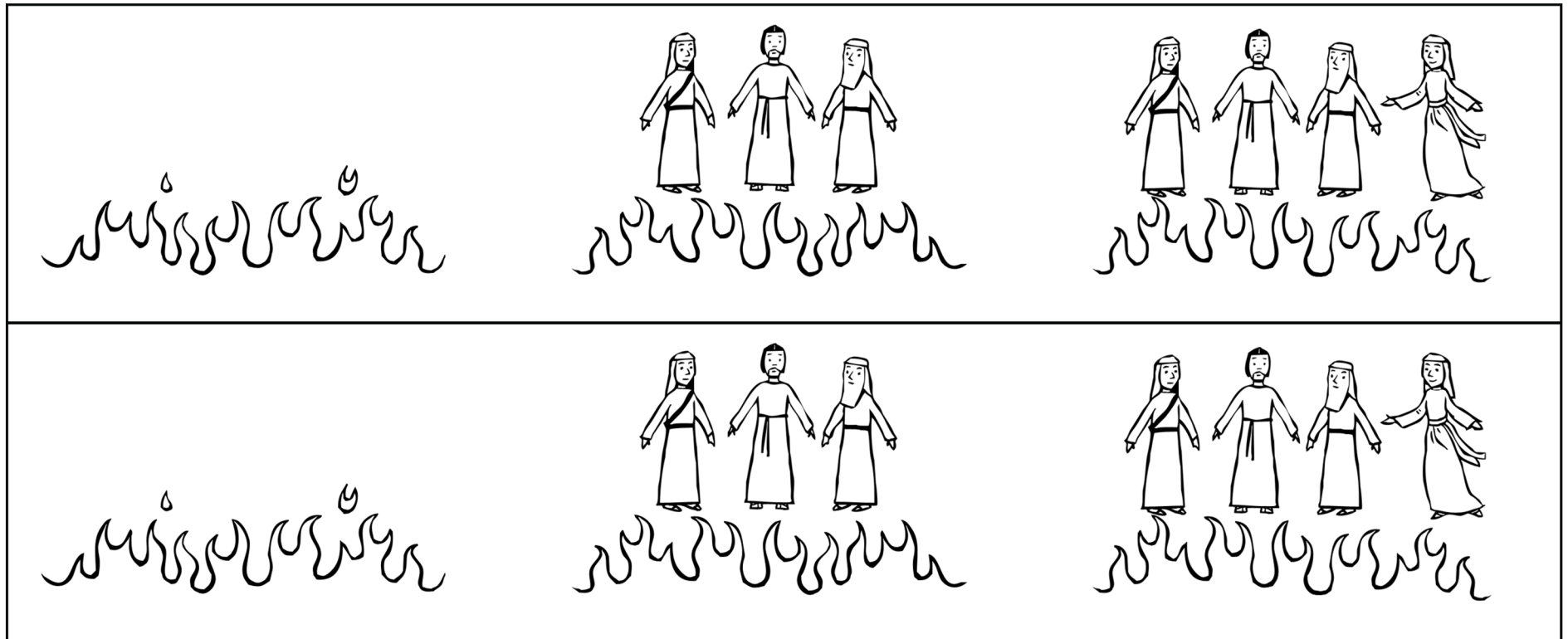






## Movie Strip

**Instructions:** Form groups of two kids and let each one cut out a movie strip below.







## Key Clues

**Instructions:** Unscramble the letters below to discover key words from today's Bible story.

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W \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

arpy

p \_ \_ \_

owb

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oybe

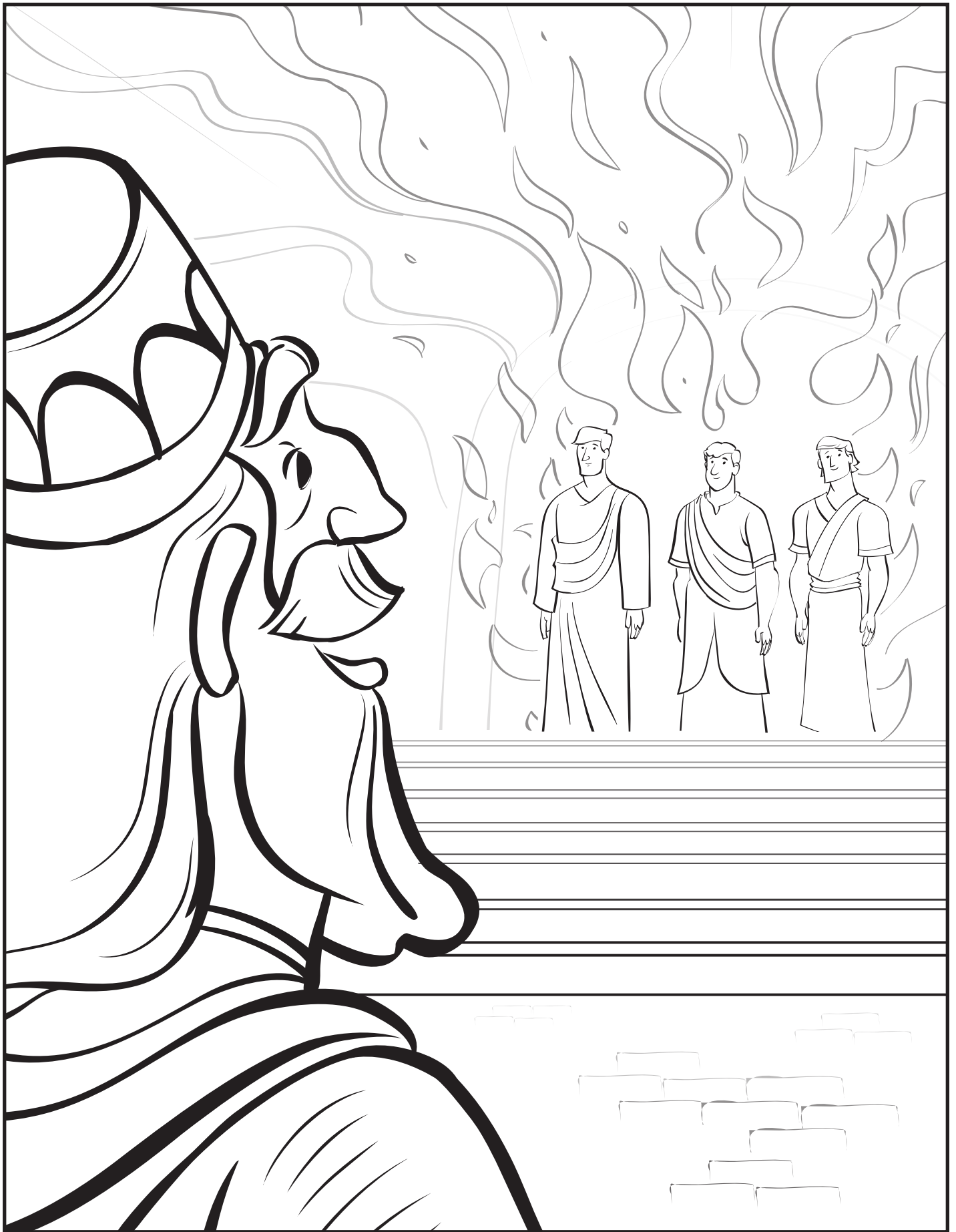
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# ALLERGY ALERT



Today we will be tasting/  
touching/sniffing:

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**Please notify the leader  
if your child should not  
participate.**

**Instructions:** Print this poster. You may laminate it and reuse it throughout the quarter. Use a dry erase marker to fill in the necessary information. Display the poster where parents and kids can see it before class.