

The Case of the Faith that Faced Fire

Daniel 1-3



Story-telling Tips

Ahead of time:

1. Read the Bible verses and story. Pray!
2. Choose story action cues and prepare storyboard figures/story scenes, if using. (In Visual Aids book)
3. Practice telling story with the storyboard pictures, timing your presentation. Shorten, if necessary.

During your presentation:

1. Maintain as much eye contact as possible as you tell the story.
2. Put up storyboard figures/add story action cues/hold up storybook scenes as you tell the story. Allow the children to help you put them on the board, if desired.
3. Include the children in your story with a few questions about what they think will happen or words/concepts that might be new to them.
4. Watch the kids for signs that their attention span has been reached. Shorten, if necessary.

INTRODUCTION/ LISTENING ASSIGNMENTS

"Our story is called: The Case of the Faith that Faced Fire. Here is your listening assignment." Read from Detective Dan's Listening Assignment signs, but questions are summarized below:

Detective Dan's Lesson #1 Listening Assignment:

I need to find out:

- 1. Who did the king order to be thrown into the fire?**
- 2. What did God give them faith to do?**

Detective Dan's Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:

Our Bible Verse is Proverbs 3:5-6:

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths."

I need to find out:

- 1. Who had to trust in the Lord in ways far bigger than they could understand?**
- 2. How did the Lord show his faithfulness to them?**

Detective Dan's Lesson #3 Listening Assignment:

I found six clues, but only 4 of them are in the story.

They are: rich clothes, a clock, a hippo, a big statue, a hot fire, and a mighty king. *Hold each of them up for the children to see as you identify them.*

I need to figure out:

- 1. Which four belong in our story?**
- 2. Who chose to praise the Lord and keep worshiping him even when it almost cost them their lives?**

Read the assignment questions, THEN SAY,

"Ok, Deep Down Detectives! Put on your best listening ears and see if you can hear the answers to Detective Dan's questions. When I finish telling the story, we will see if we can answer all the questions."

Read the Bible Truth story, answer questions, present the gospel and lead in prayer.

Answers to questions; the gospel; and, ACTS prayer are included with the story text.

The Case of the Faith that Faced Fire *Daniel 1-3*

Story with lines separating paragraphs (text in bold, optional interaction cues in italics) Numbers correspond to storyboard pictures and placement upon the storyboard. Always feel free to use less pictures, if it's best for your kids. Simply black out the numbers next to pictures you do not plan to use. All pictures are found in the Visual Aids book. Put BG (background) pictures on storyboard ahead of time. SB pictures (listed below in story text) are added to board as you tell the story. These numbers are also found on the back of each picture. Tip: Stack pictures in numerical before telling story for easy use. Use sticky-back velcro to attach pictures to storyboard felt. Use sticky-tac putty to stick a picture on top of another picture. OR, if using the Story Scenes to tell the story, disregard the storyboard picture references listed below.

(SB1) "March, march, march!" Enemy soldiers marched into Jerusalem. They tore down the Temple. They burned up the city. And now, they were forcing Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, and many others to leave Jerusalem and go far away to (SB2) Babylon to be their slaves.

(SB3) Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were sad to leave their home and work for their enemies; but, they remembered the LORD's messages through His prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

"(SB4) You people of Judah have kept on disobeying Me and worshipping fake gods. I've been patient for a long time. I've warned you and urged you to change, but you still disobey Me. (SB5) Now, I will let your enemies attack you and take you away to work for them in Babylon," the LORD told them. I'm punishing you that you might turn from your sins and return to Me."

"Don't be afraid. I'll take care of you. I'll be with you. I'll change your hearts with my Spirit, so you'll want to obey Me. I'll bring you back home to Judah," He comforted them. "(SB6) And best of all, one day, I'll send a Savior to save you from your sins. So, trust in Me! Be happy with what I want! I am the LORD, the great, one, true God," the LORD promised them.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego held onto the LORD's promises. They chose to trust in Him and be happy with what He wanted, even though they had to live far away in Babylon and work for their enemies.

(SB7) Now, Now, there was a mighty king who ruled over Babylon. He had a BIG name. Are you ready for it? It's King Nebuchadnezzar!

Can you say Nebuchadnezzar?

King Nebuchadnezzar had a helper named (SB8) Ashpenaz. Ashpenaz had a very important job. He was supposed to pick out the smartest, most handsome, young men from among the slaves and teach them to be new helpers for King Nebuchadnezzar. When Ashpenaz looked among the people of Judah for the smartest, most handsome, young men, who do you think he picked?

Can you guess who?

He picked (SB9) Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego!

"(SB10) Come with me. You're the kind of men King Nebuchadnezzar wants for his new helpers," Ashpenaz told them. "You are to go to the King's helper school. You'll eat the best food and wear the finest robes and hats," Ashpenaz told them. "You'll learn about mighty King Nebuchadnezzar and the great gods of Babylon. Then, you'll work in the king's beautiful palace and help him make good decisions," Ashpenaz explained.

Story with lines separating paragraphs (text in bold, optional interaction cues in italics)

Wow! What a good life King Nebuchadnezzar was offering Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego! The best food to eat, the finest robes and hats to wear, and the honor of working in the rich palace of the mighty king, himself! What could be better than this?

What food do you think is the best food? What would it be like to work for a mighty king?

(SB11) But Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego knew the truth. King Nebuchadnezzar was being tricky! He was giving them all these nice things so they would forget their home, the LORD, and the Bible, God's Word. Nebuchadnezzar wanted them to honor him and his fake gods instead!

And what would happen to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego if they didn't honor King Nebuchadnezzar and his fake gods? They were soon to find out.

What do you think? What would the king do?

(SB12) King Nebuchadnezzar was very proud of himself. "I am the greatest king on earth! Look at all the lands I've captured and all the people I've made into my workers," he boasted.

"I'm going to make a great, golden statue for everyone to worship," he decided. "Then, everyone will honor me and serve the great gods I worship."

(SB13) King Nebuchadnezzar ordered his workers to get started. "Build me a great, golden statue. Make it as high as a tall building. Put it where everyone can gather around it and worship it," the king told them.

(SB14) The workers obeyed the king. They (SB15) built the great, golden statue, just as the king ordered. (SB16 replaces SB15) And when it was finished, oh, how tall it was! And oh, how golden it was! It was amazing!

(SB17) Then, King Nebuchadnezzar sent word to all the people: "When the musicians play their music, you are to fall down and worship the golden statue. This shows you honor me and serve my gods," he said.

"But if anyone refuses to worship, I'll have him thrown straight into a (SB18) hot, fiery furnace," the king warned.

No one wanted to be thrown into the furnace and die. So, (SB19) when the musicians played their music, Everyone was quick to obey. (SB20) They all fell down before the statue and worshipped.

All, that is, except for three men.

Can you guess who the three were?

(SB21) Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego!

Story with lines separating paragraphs (text in bold, optional interaction cues in italics)

Yes, these three men **REFUSED** to fall down and worship that great, golden statue. The LORD was the only God they worshipped. He alone was the one, true God, and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego knew it. They weren't going to stop worshipping the LORD, even though the king threatened to throw them in a fiery furnace. So, there they stood while everyone else bowed down, sure that someone would notice.

Someone did notice! (SB22) They went straight to the king with the news. "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego don't care about you or your gods," (SB23) they exclaimed. "They refuse to fall down and worship your great, golden statue," they told the king.

Nebuchadnezzar was furious! (SB24) He ordered Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to be brought before him. "Listen to the music and fall down before my great, golden statue. Show me that you worship the statue and serve my gods," he ordered. "Do it now or be thrown into the fiery furnace! Furnace! Then, what god can rescue you?" the king demanded.

Was the king right? Was there really no god who could rescue them?

What do you think?

No! He was **WRONG!** There **WAS** a God who could rescue them. (SB26) It was the LORD! (SB33) Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego knew it and they remembered the LORD's promises to them. They would keep on worshipping Him. They would trust in Him alone.

They said to the king, "King Nebuchadnezzar, you're wrong. The LORD, the God whom we serve, can deliver us from your hot, fiery furnace if He wants to. And even if He doesn't choose to rescue us, we'll keep on worshipping Him and we'll still be happy with what He wants," they told the king. "The LORD is the one, true God and He knows what is best!"

King Nebuchadnezzar was even more furious! Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were still refusing to bow down and worship his great, golden statue. Now, they would have to die. "(SB27) Add more wood to the fire! Make it seven times hotter! Tie up these men and throw them in!" the king ordered.

(SB28) Soon, the fire was raging hot. It was so hot that the king's mighty men died from the heat as they threw Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego into the flames.

What do you think happened to them?

This should have been the end of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, but it wasn't. King Nebuchadnezzar looked into the fiery furnace and was amazed. There were (SB29) There were Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego walking around in the furnace and the flames didn't burn them up. And strangest of all, was the shining, heavenly person with them, protecting them from the fire with God's great power. (Some people think it was an angel, but others think it was Jesus.)

(SB30) King Nebuchadnezzar could hardly believe his eyes! "Come out of the fire," the king ordered the men. (SB31) Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego obeyed. They walked through the flames and out of that hot furnace. They stood before the king, without a burn on their skin or the smell of smoke on their clothes! Amazing!

Story with lines separating paragraphs (text in bold, optional interaction cues in italics)

King Nebuchadnezzar knew there was only one reason why Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were not killed or even hurt in that fiery, hot furnace.

Do you know what it was?

(SB32) It was because the LORD their God really WAS the great, one, true God!! He was to be trusted and worshipped, just like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego had said!

No longer did the king want anyone to bow down before his great, golden statue. It was great. It was golden. But it was NOT God! Now the king had a NEW God he wanted everyone to worship--the one, true God. Can you tell me His name?

Can you tell me?

It was the LORD! (SB33) (SB33) So, the king sent out a new announcement, "Praise to the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. They trusted in Him rather than worship my great, golden statue. He sent His angel to rescue them. These men deserve to be great leaders in my kingdom; and the LORD, their God, deserves all peoples in my kingdom to honor Him," the king declared. "What a great God He is!" And King Nebuchadnezzar was right!

Cracking the Case: (story wrap-up for Listening Assignments)

It's time to see how we did with our Listening Assignment.

Detective Dan's Lesson 1 Listening Assignment:**1. Who did the king order to be thrown into the fire?**

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

2. What did God give them faith to do? To NOT bow down to the golden statue, but to keep believing and trusting in Him with their whole lives.

For You and Me:

Like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, the LORD wants us to trust Him and be happy with what He wants, even when it is very hard. The LORD is always good, and His plans are always right, even if we don't understand them. And, He promises to always help His people keep trusting in Him, no matter what. How can we become God's people? By turning away from our sins and trusting in Jesus as our Savior. Ask Him to help you trust in Jesus as your Savior, and to help you trust Him with every day of your life! He loves to answer these prayers!

Detective Dan's Lesson 2 Listening Assignment:**Our Bible Verse is Proverbs 3:5- 6, ESV:**

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths."

1. Who had to trust in the LORD in ways far bigger than they could understand? Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

2. How did the LORD show His faithfulness to them? He helped them to NOT bow down to the golden statue, but to keep on believing and trusting in Him with their whole lives. He protected them from dying in the fiery furnace, too.

For You and Me:

The LORD can always be trusted. He is always up to good. His plans are always perfect. And because He is so much bigger and greater than us, there will be many times when we don't understand the good things He's up to. That's why God's people are told not to lean on their own understanding, but to keep trusting in the LORD. The LORD knows they can't do this on their own. They need His help. And He is happy to give it! He will always give His people everything they need to keep trusting in Him and be happy with what He wants.

We can become God's people, too, when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Then, God will help us trust Him and be happy with what He wants for our lives, too.

Detective Dan's Lesson 3 Listening Assignment:

Our six clues were: rich clothes, a clock, a hippo, a big statue, a hot fire, and a mighty king.

1. Which four belong in our story?

The rich clothes, the big statue, the hot fire, and the mighty king belong.

2. Who chose to praise the Lord and keep worshiping him even when it almost cost them their lives?

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

For You and Me

Like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, the LORD wants us to trust Him and be happy with what He wants, even when it is very hard. The LORD is always good, and His plans are always right, even if we don't understand them. And, He promises to always help His people keep trusting in Him, no matter what. How can we become God's people? By turning away from our sins and trusting in Jesus as our Savior. Ask Him to help you trust in Jesus as your Savior, and to help you trust Him with every day of your life! He loves to answer these prayers!

The Gospel (story wrap-up if NOT using Listening Assignments)**Our Bible Truth is:****How Should God's People Live?****They Should Live Like Jesus...****By Trusting God and Being Happy with What He Wants!**

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were right to trust in the LORD and be happy with what He wanted. The LORD kept all His promises to them and to the people of Israel, for He DID take care of them; He WAS with them. He DID change their hearts; and, He DID bring them back home. And best of all, He DID send His Son, Jesus, to save all who would ever turn away from their sins and trust in Him as their Savior.

Yes, Jesus came and lived a perfect life that pleased God. On the cross, He offered it up to God as the perfect payment for the sins of all who would ever turn away from their sins and trust in Him as their Savior. Jesus suffered and died for God's people that day. But on the third day, He rose up from the grave in victory. He really had beaten sin and death for God's people!

This gift of salvation can be ours, too, when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus, He will save us from our sins, too. And we, too, can trust Him and be happy with what He wants, every day of our lives, just like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego did.

Close in prayer.

Closing ACTS Prayer

- A** God, we praise You for always being good and deserving of our trust. You are always wise and perfect in everything You do and plan.

- C** God, please forgive us for not trusting You when things happen that we don't like or don't understand. Many times, we start doubting that You know what is best when we should keep on trusting You. We need a Savior!

- T** Thank You, God, for always doing what is best. Thank You that we can always trust You and be happy with what You allow in our lives. Even if we don't understand, we know You do.

- S** God, please work in our hearts. Help us turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to love You. Help us to trust You with everything in our lives. Help us to be happy with what You choose, even when it is hard and even when we don't understand.

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Go to Lesson Plan, p.9 for the script to the rest of the lesson.