

# Session 3

Daniel: When you get into trouble

Children learn about Daniel in the lion's den

**Scripture:** Daniel 3, 5-6

**Supplies:**

- Letter with the words: "Counted, counted; weighed and divided"
- 7 broomstick characters: King, servant, Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, 2 soldiers
- Copies of lion masks
- Copies of the lion activity
- Paint or crayons



## Welcome

**Play "Stuck in the mud":** Two children are "it". They chase the other children around. When they touch a child, that child is then "stuck in the mud". The "stuck" child must stand with their legs wide apart and outstretched arms and aren't allowed to move. The only way to be freed is for another child to crawl underneath their arms or legs. Play this for 5 to 10 minutes or until everyone is stuck.

**Hide a letter that says:** "Mene mene tekel parsin". Then play "Hot or Cold" to find the letter. Now hide another letter that says "Counted, counted, weighed and divided" and play "Hot or Cold" again to find the meaning of the strange words. For a third round, hide a bag containing sweets for every child and have them find it.



## Worship

**Settle down ritual:** Let the children close their eyes. Let them look at the dark and light patterns inside their eyelids. After 10 counts say in a quiet voice: "God's light shines over all of us, whether it's dark or light in our lives. Ask God to show you the dark things in your life and to help you get rid of them." Wait a few more seconds and then close with "Amen".



## Word

In the previous session we heard about Daniel and his three friends banding together and not eating the king's food. There in the strange city of Babylon they had to get through a lot of difficult times. Let me tell you about them.

*Re-enact the story with the broomstick characters:*

**Actors:**

King Nebuchadnezzar: proud king of Babylon

Servant: willing to help, but a little clumsy sometimes

Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego: 3 young men from Israel trusting God

2 soldiers: well trained, strong men

### ***Sound effects:***

When you hear these words, react accordingly:

King: Call out loud “Long live the king!”

Trumpets: Make trumpet sounds

Oven: Say “Hot, hot, hot!” (rub your hands together)

Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego: Call out “Three cool guys!”

One true God: Call out “Amen!”

### **Story:**

Last time we heard that long ago in Babylon there was a man named Nebuchadnezzar. He was **king** (“*Long live the king!*”)

Here he comes now. Look how proudly he’s walking around in his impressive palace. He sits down on his throne. The **king** (“*Long live the king!*”) calls his loyal servant and tells him about the plans he has to make a golden statue that is 27m high and 3m wide.

The servant leaves quickly to start making arrangements for the statue.

Finally the day comes to unveil the statue. (What was the statue made of? And how high was it? And how wide?)

Look, here comes **king** Nebuchadnezzar now! (“*Long live the king!*”)

He’s here to unveil the statue and to tell all the people what they have to do. He says in a loud voice: “When you hear the **trumpets** (*trumpet sounds*) you must all bow down and worship the golden statue. Everyone who doesn’t do it, will be thrown into the **oven!**” (“*Hot, hot, hot!*”)

Just after the **king** (“*Long live the king!*”) spoke, they heard the sound of the **trumpets** (*trumpet sounds*). They bowed down and worshiped the golden statue.

Suddenly the palace doors opened and two strong soldiers brought three young men to the **king** (“*Long live the king!*”). One of the soldiers said: “O great **king!** (“*Long live the king!*”) These Hebrew men, **Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego** (“*Three cool guys!*”) wouldn’t bow down and worship the statue when they heard the **trumpet** (*trumpet sounds*). They say they’ll only bow for the **one true God.**” (“*Amen!*”)

The **king** (“*Long live the king!*”) was furious. He ordered **Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego** (“*Three cool guys!*”) to be thrown in the **oven** (“*hot, hot, hot!*”). When the two soldiers threw **Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego** (“*Three cool guys!*”) into the **oven** (“*hot, hot, hot!*”), the fire was so hot that the two soldiers died.

The **king** (“*Long live the king!*”) was about to walk away when he saw that **Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego** (“*Three cool guys!*”) were still standing up straight in the **oven** (“*hot, hot, hot!*”) with a fourth person who looked like an angel.

The **king** (“*Long live the king!*”) ordered **Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego** (“*Three cool guys!*”) to be taken out of the **oven** (“*hot, hot, hot!*”). When they got out, the fourth person disappeared. The **king** (“*Long live the king!*”) smelled their clothes but didn’t smell any smoke. To tell you the truth, not a single hair on their head was burnt.

The **king** (“*Long live the king!*”) was so scared that he started shaking in his boots. He ordered everyone in the kingdom to start worshiping the **one true God** (“*Amen!*”).

And so it happened that the **king** (“*Long live the king!*”) confessed in front of everyone that there is only **one true God** (“*Amen!*”).

After Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar became king of Babylon. Daniel had to explain difficult things to this king as well. King Belshazzar held a big festival. He invited 1000 guests to come eat and drink wine from the golden and silver cups that came from God’s temple. While they were doing this, a hand suddenly appeared that started writing on the wall. The hand wrote: “Mene mene, tekel parsin.” No one knew what it meant. The king called Daniel and asked him to explain. The word “mene” means: ‘God has **numbered** the days of your reign and brought it to an end.’ “Tekel” means: ‘You have been **weighed** on the scales and found wanting. God is not satisfied with what you have done.’ “Parsin” means: ‘God is going to **divide** your kingdom in two and hand it over to other nations.’ Although the message was bad, the king was still impressed that Daniel could explain it. Belshazzar gave Daniel nice clothes and a chain to hang around his neck. He also gave him an even more important job in his kingdom. That same night Belshazzar was murdered.

Daniel and his friends had to be careful of all the different temptations from people who didn't worship God. They stayed faithful to God the entire time. Another thing happened to Daniel because he would only worship God.

Listen to this story about Daniel! *(You can read the story, but every time you say "Darius", the children must answer by singing "Daaaa-ri-uuuus", ending on a deep note.)*

There was a new king after Belshazzar. His name was Darius. He had appointed many important men in his kingdom – more than 120! Of all these people Daniel was by far the best. The others were jealous of Daniel and came up with a plan to get Daniel in trouble. They came up with a silly plan and said to Darius: "O King, you are so great and so important. You are the great king Darius! Announce a law that all people must worship you for 30 days and no one else. All people must pray in this time: "O Darius!" Those who don't worship the king, must be thrown to the lions."

The king thought that this was a wonderful plan and announced the new law. Daniel went on as usual praying to God three times a day in the direction of Jerusalem. The jealous men told king Darius what Daniel was doing.

King Darius had no choice but to punish Daniel for what he had done – as the new law stated. Daniel had to be thrown to the lions. King Darius felt very bad because he liked Daniel so much. He slept badly the entire night, and went to the lions' den early the next morning. He started calling out to Daniel from far away. When Daniel answered, king Darius was very surprised. Daniel told him that God sent an angel that closed the mouths of the lions. They couldn't do anything to him. King Darius realised that Daniel's God was the only true God. He was also mad at the other men who made him throw Daniel in the lions' den, so he had them thrown to the lions. The lions killed them immediately.

These two stories about the oven and the lions teach us that even our faith can get us into trouble sometimes. We often think that only doing naughty things get us into trouble. These people got into trouble because they were obedient to God!

But when you get in trouble because you are being loyal to God, remember that God is on your side. He will always save you. Never stop trusting God!

Children reflect on the story:

1. I wonder if you have ever been in trouble when you actually didn't do anything wrong
2. I wonder what Daniel and his friend could have been afraid of
3. I wonder which stories you know about people who God helped when they were scared
4. I wonder what God could help you with



### Working and Playing

- Make some lion masks
- Make the lion craft

### Closing prayer to end the session

"God chooses you to help people who are struggling, no matter who you are. Go now, don't be afraid.  
God is with you."





Copy the picture on plain paper. Cut out the solid lines (square). Colour the lion as in the 1<sup>st</sup> picture. Make an example beforehand. Colour to the edges but leave the inside of the picture blank. Fold the square to match the example (or google "fortune teller origami" for folding instructions).

