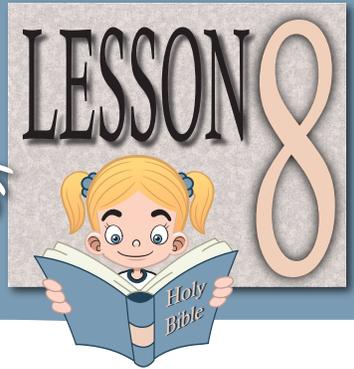


Daniel and Three Friends in Babylon

Daniel 1



Old Testament 8
Part 2: Exile and Post-Exile

SUNDAY MORNING

Old Testament 8 [Class Attendance Sheet](#) provided in activity sheets (NOTE: The document is interactive, allowing the teacher to type in the Class, Teacher, and the children's names.)

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

Daniel 1

MEMORY WORK:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: "But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself" (Daniel 1:8a, ESV).

OLDER CHILDREN: "But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the king's food, or with the wine that he drank" (Daniel 1:8a).

SONGS AND FINGERPLAYS (SEE END OF LESSON FOR WORDS):

A [song book](#) and [audio recordings](#) of many of the curriculum songs are available on the curriculum Web site.

- ["Daniel Made Good Choices"](#)
- ["Daniel Prayed to God"](#)

LESSON VISUALS AND TEACHING AIDS (NOTE ANY DISCLAIMERS):

- See [AP's Pinterest page](#) for ideas on bulletin boards, visuals, crafts, etc. [DISCLAIMER: Pins may sometimes need to be adjusted to be Scriptural.]
- [The Divided Kingdom 2 Bible fact cards](#) (provided under "O.T. 8 Bible Facts")
- "Summary of the Bible" from ["Kids Prep"](#) CD by Jeff Miller
- Pictures/drawings from any books listed under 3rd-4th Grader Pre-Class Activities/Learning Centers
- Betty Lukens' felt pieces
- Daniel A Beka Flash-A-Card Series (DISCLAIMERS: card 2.6—change "Jesus Rock of Ages" to "The Kingdom of God"; use the cards, not the lesson book)
- ["Maps of Babylonian and Persian Empires in Daniel's Time"](#) (provided in map section of curriculum Web site)
- "Daniel & God's Kingdom" chart from WVBS (<https://store.wvbs.org/free-downloads/>)



PERSONAL APPLICATION:

Like Daniel and his friends, I will purpose in my heart to obey God no matter what pressure others put on me. I will also choose not to smoke, drink alcohol, take harmful drugs, or do anything else that will hurt the body that God gave me. Making good choices about how I take care of myself shows my love and respect for God, His Word, and other people.

LESSON STARTS HERE

INTRODUCTION: (YOUNGER CHILDREN)

Show the children sugary, sweet items (like candy or chocolate) and something healthy (like baby carrots). Ask the children to choose which ones are healthy. Talk about how every day they have to make choices that will help them grow and be strong. We can learn from four young people in the Bible who pleased God because of the good choices they made.

INTRODUCTION: (OLDER CHILDREN)

What does God think about smoking and drugs? Have you ever been tempted to do something like that? What about eating too much junk food—or eating too much food? Today, we are going to talk about four teenagers, far away from home, who had to make choices to either do what God wanted them to or to do what others wanted them to do.

HISTORICAL NOTE: When Josiah died, the people chose his son Jehoahaz to be king, even though he was not the oldest son. Only three months later, Pharaoh Necho of Egypt took control of Judah and took Jehoahaz back to Egypt as a prisoner. Then Pharaoh chose Eliakim to be the puppet ruler of Judah (one who would follow orders and pay tribute) and changed his name to Jehoiakim.

Jehoiakim did not try to follow God like his father Josiah did. In fact, the year after Nebuchadnezzar first came to Palestine and made Jehoiakim pay tribute, Jehoiakim received a written message from Jeremiah with instructions and warnings from God. Jehoiakim's response was to cut the message into small pieces with a knife and burn them (Jeremiah 36).

When Nebuchadnezzar took control of Palestine from the Egyptians (606 or 605 B.C.), he began the first deportation of Jews to Babylon. He allowed Jehoiakim to stay in Jerusalem for 11 more years as the head of a puppet government, continuing to demand tribute and obedience from him (2 Kings 23:28-24:7; 2 Chronicles 36:1-8). Nebuchadnezzar carried out two more deportations of Jews to Babylon (597 and 586 B.C. The Babylonians destroyed the Temple in 586).

Daniel was born into Jewish nobility during the reign of King Josiah. He was one of the young Jewish men chosen to serve in Nebuchadnezzar's court. He lived in Babylon over 70 years—from the first year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign until at least the third year of Cyrus. (Daniel 1:21 says that he served until Cyrus' first year, but this probably refers

(continued)





HISTORICAL NOTE (cont.): to him living to see the end of Jewish captivity. Compare Daniel 10:1 and 2 Chronicles 36:22-23.) He served under four very powerful emperors (Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius, and Cyrus) and saw many different changes occur in the world. Daniel was probably in his 80s when the Jews returned to Palestine (with Cyrus' permission), but the Bible doesn't tell us when or if he returned to Palestine in his old age. Ezekiel and Jeremiah were contemporaries of Daniel.

POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. Just as the prophets had foretold, God allowed the Babylonian army to come into Palestine to punish the Jews for continuing to disobey Him. Daniel was one of hundreds of young people taken from their homeland, and probably from their families, when the mighty Babylonian army finally gained control of Jerusalem. Nebuchadnezzar's army also gradually removed the gold from the Temple in Jerusalem, including all the vessels (containers, cups, etc.) and utensils used in Jewish worship, and took them to the temple of a Babylonian idol.
2. Nebuchadnezzar told his chief officer, Ashpenaz, to find "young men in whom there was no blemish, but good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand, who had ability to serve in the king's palace" (Daniel 1:4). He wanted the "best and brightest" to be prepared to serve him. He gave Ashpenaz three years to train these young men in Babylonian literature and language and in how to serve the king. Among those young men were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. The Babylonians changed Daniel's name [which means "God is my Judge"] to Beltshazzar after the name of one of their gods (Daniel 1:7 and 4:8). Hananiah became Shadrach, Mishael became Meshach, and Azariah became Abed-Nego.
3. The four young men refused to eat of the "choice" or "rich" food (ASV—"dainties") set before them by Ashpenaz. To eat it would have meant defiling themselves under Jewish law by eating food they were commanded not to eat (Leviticus 11). Instead, they ate vegetables and drank water for 10 days (a testing period) and were found to be healthier than all the rest—much to the amazement of those overseeing their training.



NOTE: God apparently intended at the beginning for humans (and many animals) to be vegetarian (Genesis 1:29-30). After the Flood, however, God authorized humans to eat animals (Genesis 9:3). Under the Law of Moses, the Israelites were not to eat certain things—creatures deemed for them "unclean" by God. Those rules did not apply to Gentiles, and what was defined as clean or unclean was not necessarily always about health. In the Christian era, rules about what foods are clean or unclean have been removed (cf. Acts 10:15; 1 Timothy 4:1-3; Romans 14; 1 Corinthians 8; 1 Corinthians 10:23-33).



RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS: See the articles "[Jesus Was a Vegetarian](#)" and "[Is It Wrong to Eat Pork?](#)" by Kyle Butt and "[Were All Men Vegetarians before the Flood?](#)" by Eric Lyons on the Apologetics Press Web site for a discussion of the what the Bible teaches about vegetarianism and eating certain foods.

4. Daniel 1:8 is the key verse to this story: "But Daniel purposed in his heart ("resolved"—ESV) that he would not defile himself." Daniel and his friends were determined to do right, no matter what the cost. God blessed them because of their faithfulness to His Word and their willingness to do what

was right. Daniel was specifically given the ability to understand “all visions and dreams” (Daniel 1:17b) because he wanted to obey God.

5. It would have been easy for these four young men to compromise or ignore what they had been taught all their lives. Who would know or care, since they were so far from home? **God** would know! Just like Joseph in Egypt, they knew any sin committed would be against God Almighty—whether their parents knew about it or not. (“How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” Joseph said in Genesis 39:9b.)
6. Like Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, we must make up our minds that we will do what God wants us to do, no matter what pressure others put on us to do things a different way. Daniel and his three friends knew that to eat the wrong things would hurt their influence and would show disrespect to God because it would have meant disobeying the God’s Law. It is important that we make up our minds (about drugs, drinking, etc.) about how we will behave **before** we are tempted to do wrong; then the temptation will seem much easier to deal with. There should **never** be a time when we “just try” something “to see what it’s like.”
7. Although Christians do not have the dietary laws that the Jews had under the Law of Moses (it is no longer sinful to eat pork, for example), we do know that there are certain things we should limit taking into our bodies because of the effect they will have on us. [Talk about the dangers of eating too much junk food, sweets, or meats.]. We also know that there are some foods that we should eat because our bodies need them in order to function properly and will strengthen us to be able to serve God better. Also, don’t forget that “bodily exercise profits” as well—1 Timothy 4:8.
8. Our bodies are not our own, but rather, are on loan from God (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). Our job is to use the bodies God gave us to serve Him faithfully. If we destroy our bodies by eating terrible things or doing terrible things to our bodies, we will not be able to serve Him as well or as long (Romans 12:1-2). If we die sooner than God intended us to because of our habits, it could affect the lives of those whom God intended for us to influence during the extra years we could have lived. As such, we would not want to use tobacco or do drugs. Also, while God has not given us specific dietary laws as He gave the Jews in the Old Testament, He has commanded us to be “sober-minded” (1 Peter 1:13; 5:8; Titus 2:2,6; 1 Thessalonians 5:8). Some things we take into our bodies can interfere with being sober-minded (e.g., alcohol and drugs). God also prohibits gluttony (cf. Proverbs 23:2,21; Ezekiel 16:49).
9. What are some ways we can hurt our bodies? What would you think if you were in a crowd of people your own age and you were pushed to eat or drink something you knew wasn’t good for you? How would others feel about you if you did try it, i.e., how would your influence be affected?

PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—BEFORE CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):

- Click here for complete [Activity Book](#) and [Answer Key](#).

Ages 2-5:

- “[Daniel and Friends Coloring Sheet](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- Provide healthy things that the children can eat and drink (such as cheese, apples, grapes, juice) while you talk about taking care of their bodies. You may want to ask the children to close their eyes and taste something, then try to guess what it is.

- Provide magazine pictures of food that the children can glue onto paper plates or “place mats” (e.g., 9x12 construction paper) as you talk about making healthy food choices.
- Bring toy food items, and let the children cook a pretend meal for you.
- Bring toy food or pictures, both healthy and unhealthy, and two baskets. Put a smiley face on one basket for healthy food, and a sad face on the other basket for unhealthy food. Let the children decide in which basket the food or pictures belong. (Example “[Food Cutouts](#)” and “[Drug Cutouts](#)” provided in activity sheets)

1st-2nd Graders:

- Provide healthy things that the children can eat and drink (such as cheese, apples, grapes, juice) while you talk about taking care of their bodies. You may want to ask the children to close their eyes and taste something, then try to guess what it is.
- “[Daniel and Three Friends Word Search](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- Read and discuss as much as you think appropriate from *Discovery* articles in the [February, 2005](#) issue.
- Make a copy of a Nebuchadnezzar dream statue outline for each child; let the children color and label it correctly. Write “Daniel prayed for wisdom.” at the top of each sheet. **Or** make a copy of the statue; let children cut the statue shapes into appropriate pieces and put pieces of magnetic tape on the back of each piece. See <http://www.christart.com/clipart/image/nebuchadnezzars-dream> and <http://biblepuzzles.blogspot.com/2012/02/bible-coloring-pages-nebuchadnezzars.html> for clip art depictions of the statue.

3rd-4th Graders:

- “[Daniel and Three Friends Word Search](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- “[Daniel and Three Friends True or False](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- Read and discuss as much as you think appropriate from *Discovery* articles in the [February, 2005](#) issue.
- Have the children read the following:
 - Daniel 1-2
 - *Discovery* magazine articles: [February, 2005](#); “Be Ready Before It Happens,” [May, 2002](#)
 - *Daniel: The Praying Prince*, by Carine Mackenzie, Christian Focus Publications (DISCLAIMER: last page—some believe we should only pray to the Father)
 - *Daniel*, by Anne de Graaf, Little Children’s Bible Books, Broadman & Holman Publishers (DISCLAIMER: skip p. 39)
 - *Elijah and the Great Prophets*, by Joy Melissa Jensen, Contemporary Bible Series, Scandinavia Publishing (DISCLAIMERS: p. 20—the text says a “great fish,” not a “whale”; p. 36—skip the phrase “like the one in his dream”; p. 49—skip the last two sentences; p. 61—change the first sentence of the second paragraph to “So a new law was written that protected the Jews.”)

SONGS:

“DANIEL MADE GOOD CHOICES” ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Unknown*

(Tune: “Mary Had a Little Lamb”)

Daniel had a choice to make, choice to make, choice to make.

Daniel had a choice to make,
Oh, what would he do?

Yes, he chose to eat good food, eat good food, eat good food.

Yes, he chose to eat good food,
To make him strong and healthy.

After they ate for 10 days, for 10 days, for 10 days.

After they ate for 10 days,
They were very strong.

Everyone should eat good food, eat good food, eat good food.

Everyone should eat good food,
To be strong and healthy.

“DANIEL PRAYED TO GOD” ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Lora Laycook

(Tune: Chorus of “Blessed Be the Name”)

Daniel prayed to God, Daniel prayed to God,

Daniel prayed to God three times a day.

Daniel prayed to God, Daniel prayed to God,

Daniel prayed to God three times a day.

Let us pray to God, let us pray to God,

Let us pray to God every day.

Let us pray to God, let us pray to God,

Let us pray to God every day.

*Author Unknown: Please contact us through the feedback button for this lesson if you are aware of any copyright information for this song.

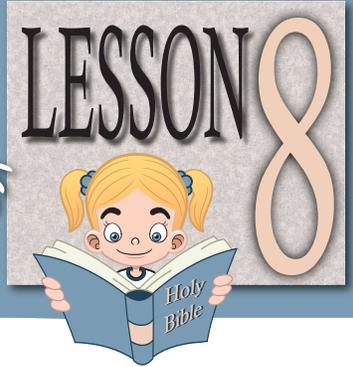
*** IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS PERTAINING TO THIS LESSON, PLEASE CLICK THE “SUGGESTION” BUTTON BESIDE THE BUTTON FOR THIS LESSON ON THE CURRICULUM WEB SITE.



Daniel Interprets

Dreams

Daniel 2



Old Testament 8
Part 2: Exile and Post-Exile

WEDNESDAY EVENING

Old Testament 8 [Class Attendance Sheet](#) provided in activity sheets (NOTE: The document is interactive, allowing the teacher to type in the Class, Teacher, and the children's names.)

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

Daniel 2

MEMORY WORK:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: "But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself" (Daniel 1:8a, ESV).

OLDER CHILDREN: "But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the king's food, or with the wine that he drank" (Daniel 1:8a).

SONGS AND FINGERPLAYS (SEE END OF SUNDAY'S LESSON FOR WORDS):

A [song book](#) and [audio recordings](#) of many of the curriculum songs are available on the curriculum Web site.

- ["Daniel Made Good Choices"](#)
- ["Daniel Prayed to God"](#)

LESSON VISUALS AND TEACHING AIDS (NOTE ANY DISCLAIMERS):

- See [AP's Pinterest page](#) for ideas on bulletin boards, visuals, crafts, etc. [DISCLAIMER: Pins may sometimes need to be adjusted to be Scriptural.]
- [The Divided Kingdom 2 Bible fact cards](#) (provided under "O.T. 8 Bible Facts")
- "Summary of the Bible" from "[Kids Prep](#)" CD by Jeff Miller
- Pictures/drawings from any books listed under 3rd-4th Grader Pre-Class Activities/Learning Centers
- Betty Lukens' felt pieces
- Daniel A Beka Flash-A-Card Series (DISCLAIMERS: card 2.6—change "Jesus Rock of Ages" to "The Kingdom of God"; use the cards, not the lesson book)
- "[Maps of Babylonian and Persian Empires in Daniel's Time](#)" (provided in map section of curriculum Web site)
- "Daniel & God's Kingdom" chart from WVBS (<https://store.wvbs.org/free-downloads/>)



PERSONAL APPLICATION:

Like Daniel and his friends, I will purpose in my heart to obey God no matter what pressure others put on me. I will also choose not to smoke, drink alcohol, take harmful drugs, or do anything else that will hurt the body that God gave me. Making good choices about how I take care of myself shows my love and respect for God, His Word, and other people.

INTRODUCTION:

Review [O.T. 8 Bible Fact Flash Cards](#) (provided under “O.T. 8 Bible Facts” on curriculum Web site)

POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. Review Sunday’s lesson. (See [O.T. 8 Review Questions](#) for example questions.)
2. During Nebuchadnezzar’s second year as ruler of the Babylonian Empire, he had several dreams that troubled him. None of his magicians, sorcerers, astrologers, or “wise men” could interpret his dreams. He ordered that all of them be killed, but Daniel stepped in and said he could tell the king what his dreams meant—with God’s help. Daniel and his three friends (Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego) prayed all night long that God would help Daniel understand the meaning of the king’s dreams. The next day, just as the young men prayed for, God helped Daniel to explain the king’s dream. The king was overwhelmed by Daniel’s wisdom and by the God who helped him. He appointed all four of the young men to important jobs in the government. [Use “[The Book of Daniel & God’s Kingdom](#)” chart from the recommended visuals to discuss Nebuchadnezzar’s vision and the interpretation.]



NOTE: Daniel became a **seer**, meaning he was able with God’s help to see and understand things others could not. He was also a **prophet** because he could tell others what their visions meant.

3. The four young men had strong faith in God. They prayed for help and guidance from God, and they prayed for one another. Sometimes there are things we don’t know how to handle, or our friends have problems and we don’t know what to do for them. The best thing we can do for one another is to pray for one another!
4. [Discuss details of the dream with older children as you believe is appropriate. The first kingdom described is Babylon; the second, Medo-Persia; the third, Greece; the fourth, Rome. In the days of the Roman Empire, the Kingdom that would never end would be established, i.e., the Lord’s Church.]



RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS: See the article “[The Interpretation of Daniel 2:39](#)” on the Apologetics Press Web site for a response to an alleged biblical inaccuracy regarding Daniel’s interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream.

PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—**BEFORE** CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):

- See Sunday morning’s lesson.

***** IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS PERTAINING TO THIS LESSON, PLEASE CLICK THE “SUGGESTION” BUTTON BESIDE THE BUTTON FOR THIS LESSON ON THE CURRICULUM WEB SITE.**

