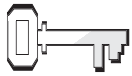


Captured!



References

Daniel 1:1, 2;
2 Kings 24:1-16;
Prophets and Kings,
pp. 479-490



Memory Verse

"I have chosen the way of truth; I have set my heart on your laws"
(Psalm 119:30, NIV).

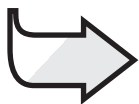


Objectives

The children will:
Know that we can serve God by helping our friends to be true to God.

Feel of use to God whatever the circumstances.

Respond by encouraging friends to choose God's way.



The Message

I serve God when I help my friends make good choices.

Monthly Theme

We serve God wherever we are.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon invades Jerusalem and conquers the land of Judah. Ten thousand people from the land of Judah, including Judah's King Jehoiachim and Daniel, are taken back to Babylon as captives. Daniel and other young men are taken to the king's palace to be trained for the king's service in Babylon. Daniel and his friends determine to serve God as they had been taught, no matter what happens.

This is a lesson about service.

Daniel and three of the other captives decided to serve God in their new, strange circumstances. Their dependence on God and their friendship gave them added strength to serve God and to do what was right even though they were captives in a foreign land. God's children support one another in right living and serving Him.

Teacher Enrichment

"Seeing in these youth the promise of remarkable ability, Nebuchadnezzar determined that they should be trained to fill important positions in his kingdom. . . . He arranged for them to learn the language of the Chaldeans, and for three years to be granted the unusual educational advantages afforded princes of the realm" (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 480).

"The names of Daniel and his companions were changed to names representing Chaldean deities. . . .

"The king did not compel the Hebrew youth to renounce their faith in favor of idolatry, but he hoped to bring this about gradually. By giving them names significant of idolatry, by bringing them daily into close association with idolatrous customs, and under the influence of the seductive rites of heathen worship, he hoped to induce them to renounce the religion of their nation and to unite with the worship of the Babylonians" (*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 480, 481).

"The Lord measures with exactness every possibility for service. The unused capabilities are just as much brought into account as those that are used. We shall be judged by what we ought to have done, but did not accomplish because we did not use our powers to glorify God" (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 488).

Room Decorations

Create a throne room. Hang a curtain on the wall. Add a mat and a chair covered with red cloth to make a throne.

Bulletin board ideas: Food pyramid chart; information on the hanging gardens of Babylon; map showing the journey from Jerusalem to Babylon; image from Daniel 2.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Who's Missing?</i> B. <i>Blindfold Buddy</i>	none blindfold, bucket or pan
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> box, pictures of foreign lands cutout shape of person (see p. 150), pens, glue, large sheet of paper or poster board
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	none Bibles Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Right Choices</i>	copies of scenarios (see activity)
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>The Buddy System</i>	none

***Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.**

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Listen to last week’s memory verse and encourage the children to share any experiences from last week’s lesson study. Have them begin the readiness activity of your choice.



Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

A. Who’s Missing?

Have the children spread out around the room. Say: **I want you to close your eyes. While you have them closed, I will touch someone. That person has to go quietly out of the room. When I ask you to open your eyes, see if you can tell who is missing.** Repeat it several times. Have the children move around so they are not in the same place. Touch a different child each time.

Debriefing

Ask: **How hard was it to decide who had gone? Why? What would you think if some of your friends suddenly disappeared? In our story today, we’ll find out about some boys who were captured and taken to a different country. They had to make some hard choices. But they helped each other. Today’s message is:**



I SERVE GOD WHEN I HELP MY FRIENDS MAKE GOOD CHOICES.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- blindfold
- bucket or pan

B. Blindfold Buddy

Form pairs. Blindfold one child in the first pair. Place an overturned bucket or dish-pan on the floor on the other side of the room. Turn the blindfolded person around a few times, then ask them to go to the bucket and sit down on it. Ask: **Would you like someone to guide you? Your buddy can help you by telling you where to go.** Give everyone the opportunity to try. Large group: use more buckets or pans and have several pairs trying at the same time.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you say: **Raise your hand if you found the bucket and sat down without help. Raise your hand if you needed help. What was it like to try to find your way without help? with help? How did your buddy help you? How did that change the way you felt? In our story today, some boys who were captured during a war helped each other. They chose to stay true to God no matter what. Today’s message is :**



I SERVE GOD WHEN I HELP MY FRIENDS MAKE GOOD CHOICES.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise

Any
Time



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing from last week's lesson study and review last week's memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

- "Dare to Be a Daniel" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 116)
- "This Little Light of Mine" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 134)
- "Teach Me, Lord" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 110)
- "Sandy Land" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 121)
- "Whisper a Prayer" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 96)
- "Jesus Bids Us Shine" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 133)



Mission

Share a story from *Children's Mission*. Emphasize how the people in the story were influenced by those around them.



Offering

Look at the pictures and identify where they are. Say: **God calls us to serve Him wherever we are. Our offerings help to support God's work both here and in faraway places.**

You Need:

- box covered with pictures of places the children will recognize, and some foreign places



Prayer

Give each child a cutout. Say: **By our actions and what we say we can help our friends make good or bad decisions. Think of a friend you would like to help make good choices. Write their name on your figure, then glue it on our poster.** During the prayer, mention the names on the figures. Ask God to help each child to help their friends make positive decisions.

You Need:

- cutout shape of person for each child (see p. 150)
- pens
- glue
- large sheet of poster board or paper

Bible Lesson

Experiencing the Story

As you read or tell the story have the children interact by doing the following actions:

When you say:	They do:
Daniel	Nod head yes.
Hananiah	Three fingers up.
Azariah	Three fingers up.
Mishael	Three fingers up.
Nebuchadnezzar	Shake head no.
God	Point up.

Read or tell the story.

The country of Judah had forgotten about **God** again. But a few people still loved and worshiped the true **God**. **Daniel's** family was among them. When **Daniel** was born, his parents gave him a name to remind him always to be loyal to **God**. **Daniel** means "**God** is my judge." As **Daniel** grew up, he decided that he wanted to live up to his name and only serve **God**. **God** came first in his small everyday chores as well as in bigger things.

Daniel lived in Jerusalem, the capital city of Judah, where King Jehoiakim lived and ruled. The king did not worship **God**; rather, he encouraged the people to worship idols. He built beautiful temples to foreign gods and led the people in celebrating their holidays. **Daniel** decided that no matter what happened, wicked King Jehoiakim would not force him to do wrong. **Daniel** was not alone. He had three friends, **Hananiah**, **Azariah**, and **Mishael**, who also wanted to honor **God** and put Him first in their lives.

King **Nebuchadnezzar** of Babylon was building an empire, and he decided to attack Jerusalem. He quickly defeated

the Hebrew army, entered the city, and captured King Jehoiachim. The Babylonian army went into the temple and took away many golden vessels and other treasures. The soldiers went through the city taking anything they wanted from peoples' homes.

As well as taking beautiful treasures, King **Nebuchadnezzar** took 10,000 prisoners back to Babylon. **Daniel** and his three friends were among them. They were taken away from their families and everything they had known. But they encouraged one another and decided that no matter what happened when they arrived in Babylon, they would live for **God**. They would help each other make right choices.

Upon arriving in Babylon they were given new names. **Daniel** became "Belteshazzar;" **Hananiah** was "Shadrach;" **Mishael**, "Meshach;" and **Azariah** became "Abednego." All of these new names honored Babylonian gods. King **Nebuchadnezzar** hoped they would soon deny their Hebrew faith in the God of heaven and worship the Babylonian gods.

Daniel had lost his home and his family. He had even lost his name. What did he have left?

Lots.

Nebuchadnezzar and all his armies could not take **God** away from **Daniel**. **God** lived deep inside his heart. **Daniel** had everything he needed.

God remembered **Daniel** and his three friends. He had a special work for them to do. **God** wanted **Nebuchadnezzar** to learn about Him. These four Hebrews would lead the way to teach the king.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you say:

Imagine that you are one of the four young captives. What has happened to you? What do you think about your future? What do you think will happen to you and your friends?

What decision did Daniel and his friends make? (to serve God no matter what happened to them) How had their lives before captivity helped them make that decision? Who helped them to choose to serve God in everything that would happen to them? (God; they encouraged and helped each other.) How can you help your friends make good choices? Let's remember today's message:



I SERVE GOD WHEN I HELP MY FRIENDS MAKE GOOD CHOICES.

Memory Verse

Have the children find and read the memory verse in their Bibles (Psalm 119:30, NIV).

Use the following motions and repeat as needed as you teach the memory verse.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| I have | Point to self. |
| chosen the way of truth; | Touch lips, then move finger outward. |
| I have set | Point to self. |
| my heart | Hand over heart. |
| on your laws. | Point upward. |
| Psalm 119:30 | Palms together, then open. |

Bible Study

Say: Daniel and his friends encour-

aged and helped each other make good choices. Let's find some other people who helped their friends follow God. I will give you some clues. See if you can guess who it is. Then I will call out the text so we can check whether we were right. Make sure that someone assists nonreaders.

They lived in Old Testament times.
They were best friends.
One was a prince, one became a king.
(David and Jonathan; 1 Samuel 20:42)

One was under a tree.
One went to find the other one.
They were both disciples.
(Philip and Nathaniel; John 1:43-45)

They traveled together.
They lived in New Testament times.
They sang songs in a jail at midnight.
(Paul and Silas; Acts 16:25)

They walked 14 miles one night.
They lived in New Testament times.
They talked with Jesus in the dark.
(Cleopas and another man on the road to Emmaus; Luke 24:13, 32-34)

Debriefing

Ask: **What do all these people have in common?** (They encouraged one another.) **Together they made good choices. We can also encourage our friends to make good choices in difficult circumstances. Remember . . .**



I SERVE GOD WHEN I HELP MY FRIENDS MAKE GOOD CHOICES.

You Need:

- Bibles

You Need:

- Bibles

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- copies of scenarios

Right Choices

In advance, prepare copies of the following scenarios. Form four groups. Give each group one of the scenarios.

Say: **Read the scenario and think of two positive ways you could respond and help the person make the right choice.**

1. You and your friends are playing outside. A person whom no one really likes comes and wants to join you. Someone says, NO WAY! What will you do?

2. Your teacher has been called out of the room for a phone call. You are about to take a test. It is sitting on her desk. One person in the class says, "Look! Here are the answers! I'll tell you what they are." You didn't study last night. What do you do?

3. You have been invited to a friend's house. They tell you that their cousin has brought a movie that does not sound like something a Christian should watch. What will you do?

4. At church, some of the other children want to go play outside during the worship service. They tell you to pretend you have to go to the bathroom so you can come out. What will you do?

Allow time for the children to share their solutions.

Debriefing

Ask: **Is it always easy to help others make the right decisions? Why?**

How will the choices you make now help you to make good decisions as you grow up? Who can help you?

(God, parents, teachers, other friends)

How do you feel when you say no or go against your friends in other ways? (It does not always feel good.)

By standing up for what is right, you can encourage others to do the same. If you want to do that, raise your hand.

Let's say our message together:



I SERVE GOD WHEN I HELP MY FRIENDS MAKE GOOD CHOICES.

4

Sharing the Lesson

The Buddy System

Say: **Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego helped each other to be true to God. We can help our friends be true to God too. We can talk to each other; we can pray with each other and for each other. That is called being accountable to each other.**

Today, we're going to learn about the buddy system. Your buddy is another person who will help build you up in Jesus; someone who will help you make right choices.

Divide the children into pairs. Then act out with an adult how the buddy system works. Tell the other teacher you have a problem such as watching too much TV, being mean to a sibling, not spending time with Jesus, etc. The other adult responds by discussing or sharing ideas to help you and by promising to pray for you every day this week.

Allow time for the buddies to talk together. Encourage them to agree on a time to share their thoughts each day

during the week and to pray together for each other. This may be done in person or by a telephone call, or by e-mail.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask:

How does it feel to know that you will have someone to share thoughts with, someone who will be praying for you this week? For whom will you pray?

What does it mean to be accountable?

Encourage the children to contact each other during the week, to encourage and pray for one another. **We can help each other be true to Jesus! Let's say our message together:**



I SERVE GOD WHEN I HELP MY FRIENDS MAKE GOOD CHOICES.

Closing

Sing the first verse of "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 119). Pray that the children will make good choices and help their friends to make good choices.

You Need:

- *Sing for Joy*

Captured!

References

Daniel 1:1, 2;
2 Kings 24:1-16;
Prophets and Kings,
pp. 479-490

Memory Verse

"I have chosen the way of truth; I have set my heart on your laws" (Psalm 119:30, NIV).

The Message

I serve God when I help my friends make good choices.

Imagine what it would be like if you suddenly had to leave your home. If you could not take anything with you. What if you had to leave your family? Daniel had to leave everything behind. It happened a long time ago . . .

The people of Judah had forgotten about God again. Many chose to break God's laws and worship idols. But a few people still loved and worshiped the true God. Daniel's family was among them.

When Daniel was born, his parents gave him a special name. They wanted to remind him always to be loyal to God. Daniel's name means, "God is my judge." His parents wanted him to know that it did not matter what people around him did or said. The only thing that really mattered was whether God would be happy with what Daniel did. As he grew up, Daniel decided to live for God. He put God first in everything he did. God came first in his everyday chores and in bigger things. Daniel wanted to be a servant of God, just as Samuel had been.

Daniel lived in Jerusalem, the capital city of Judah. King Jehoiakim also lived in Jerusalem. The king did not worship God. He encouraged the people to wor-

ship idols. He built beautiful temples to foreign gods. And he led the Hebrew people in celebrating those gods' holidays. Daniel decided that no matter what happened,

wicked King Jehoiakim could not force him to do wrong. Daniel was not alone. He had three friends: Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael, who also wanted God to be first in their lives.

While Daniel and his friends were still young, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon attacked Jerusalem. He quickly defeated the Hebrew army and entered the city. His army captured King Jehoiachim and his family. They went into the temple Solomon had built and took away many golden treasures. As the soldiers went through the city, they took anything they wanted from people's homes.

King Nebuchadnezzar took many prisoners back to Babylon. Among them were Daniel and his three friends. They were taken away from their families into a foreign land. Though torn away from home and family, they encouraged each other. Together they decided that when they arrived in Babylon, they would live for God. They would help each other make right choices.

Upon arriving in Babylon the four were given new names. Daniel became Belteshazzar; Hananiah was named Shadrach; Mishael became Meshach; and Azariah became Abednego. These new names honored foreign gods, gods they could not worship.

Daniel had lost his home and his family. He had even lost his name. What did he have left?

Much.

Nebuchadnezzar and all his armies could not take God away from Daniel. God lived deep inside his heart. Daniel had everything he needed: a loving God and good friends to encourage him.

God would remember Daniel and his three friends. He had a special work for them to do. God wanted Nebuchadnezzar to learn about Him. These four Hebrews would lead the way. They would teach the king about the God of heaven.



Daily Activities

Sabbath

- Read Daniel 1:1, 2 with your family. Discuss what it would be like to be taken away from your family to live in another country.
- Ask each member of your family what they value most. How would they feel if someone came and took it? How did the Hebrews feel when Nebuchadnezzar took precious things from the temple?
- Draw some of the treasures that Nebuchadnezzar may have taken from the temple. Pray that God will help you to put the right value on things.

Sunday

- Make a paper chain. Write one word of the memory verse on each link. During worship teach your memory verse to your family.
- Talk about how Daniel and his friends were taken away as prisoners. What did they think? How did they survive? What would you have done?
- Pray for people who are in prison because they love Jesus.

Monday

- Make a card for someone who needs encouragement.
- If possible, go for a walk with some friends. Or call a friend. Discuss ways to help one another make good choices. Thank God for your friends.

Tuesday

- Look in the newspaper or watch the news. Are there any wars today?
- Read and discuss 2 Kings 24:1-16 together during family worship. How many people did Nebuchadnezzar take to Babylon?
- Find out how many people live in your town.

How does this compare with the number of people Nebuchadnezzar took to Babylon?

- Pray that God will help your country's leaders to make good and wise decisions.

Wednesday

- During worship ask your parents to tell you about their friends when they were your age. Did their friends help them choose God's way?
- Find and read about two friends in the Bible who helped each other.
- Think of a way you can help or encourage a friend today. Pray that your friend will make good decisions today.

Thursday

- Daniel and his friends were given new names when they arrived in Babylon. Think up a new name for each member of your family. Share them at worship time and tell why you chose that name.
- Write a letter from Daniel to a friend back in Jerusalem and share it during worship.
- Sing "This Little Light of Mine" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 134).
- Thank God that you are His child, and that He can use you to help your friends. Pray for people who are struggling to make right decisions.

Friday

- Daniel's name means "God is my judge." Try to find out what your name means. Ask your parents why they chose your name. With your family, act out the story of Daniel and his friends going into captivity.
- Sing "Dare to Be a Daniel" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 116) before prayer. Then, invite God to help your family encourage others to make wise choices.