



OLD TESTAMENT: DANIEL AND HIS FRIENDS

Lesson 31

BIG IDEA

Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, attacks Jerusalem and takes prisoners. Daniel and his three friends are among the prisoners and are trained for special service. Daniel is given several important visions. His three friends are tested and thrown into a fiery furnace where an angel protects them. Daniel is sent to the lion's den because he prays to God.

MEMORY VERSE

Psalm 8

KEY VERSES

Book of Daniel

• PREPARATION & MATERIALS •

BIBLE SKIT - LIONS HEAD PILLOW

- 2 cups of sand separated into 2 zip-top plastic bags
- 4 clear plastic cups
- 2 bottles of water
- can of Scotch Guard
- Cast: TL wearing baseball cap. Bear wearing bear ears.
- *Experience Mission will provide a baseball cap and bear ears.*

GAME - BLANKET VOLLEYBALL

- Two blankets or sheets of the same size
- Beach ball
- Optional - tape or rope for boundaries

WORKSHEETS

- Photocopies of Coloring Sheet (1 per child)

CRAFT

- Yellow and tan (or orange) fleece precut into 12 inch circles, one of each color per child (**Precut 24 slits along the edge of the circle, about 2.5 inches deep (so it looks like the sun with rays)
- Tacky glue (optional)
- Wiggly eyes (optional)
- Black sharpie to draw nose and whiskers
- Polyester batting, a couple handfuls per child



Psalm 8

Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!



(extend hands to sides)

You have set your glory in the heavens.



(extend hands high)

Through the praise of children and infants you have



("stop" hand)

established a stronghold against your enemies,

To silence the foe and the avenger.



(index finger over lips)

(wiggle fingers both hands)

When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers,



The moon and the stars which you have set in place,



(point to moon and stars)

What is mankind that you are mindful of them,



(shrug shoulders)

Human beings that you care for them?

You have made them a little lower than the angels



(flat hand at waist)

And crowned them with glory and honor.



(make crown with hands)

You have made them rulers over the works of your

hands;



(open hands)

You put everything under their feet:



(stomp feet)

All flocks and herds, and the animals of the wild,



(hands like claws)

The birds in the sky, and the fish in the sea, all that swim

the paths of the seas.



(hands together wiggle like fish)

Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!



(arms up as if cheering)



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BIBLE OBJECT LESSON

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CAST

TL wearing baseball cap. Bear wearing bear ears.

THE SKIT

**Prepare bag of supplies: 4 clear plastic cups, 1 zip bag of regular sand, 1 zip bag of waterproof sand, 2 bottles of water.

TL (Enter stage with bag of supplies)

Bear (Enter stage) Hi TL. What's all that for?

TL Hi Bear. I've got this awesome sand experiment to teach you about protection.

Bear (Puzzled) How will sand and water teach about protection?

TL Let me show you. There was a great king in Babylon named Nebuchadnezzar. (Place one bag of sand out so kids can see.) This bag of sand is Nebuchadnezzar. He conquered the Israelites. He chose some of the best looking and smartest young men to be trained so they could serve in his royal court. The young men were renamed by the king, they were called Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. (Place the second bag of sand where the kids can see) This bag of sand is Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. They were given a special diet of meat and wine, the meat and wine had been offered to idols. They friends faced a hard decision, should they break the laws of Israel and eat food that was considered unclean? Should they risk starving and make the king angry.

Bear Gee, that's a pretty tough decision. They could get into big trouble for disobeying the king.

TL They made the decision to please God and not the king, they said, "We cannot eat this meat and drink this wine, our laws forbid it. Give us vegetables and bread. We will not eat meat or drink wine for 10 days. After that see if we seem healthy." So they had a special diet for 10 days and then they were brought before King Nebuchadnezzar. The king was more pleased with these four young men then he was with all the others. He gave them important places in his kingdom.

Bear Well, that turned out pretty well.

TL Yes, God had some big plans for these young men, and no king was going to change that plan. One night King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream. It really worried him, so he called for his fortune tellers and magicians. They said, "tell us about your dream and we will tell you what it means."

The king said, "No, I want you to tell me what I dreamed AND tell me the meaning. If you can I will give you a reward. But if you can't then you will die.

"That's impossible," they said, "only the gods could do such a thing." They were not talking about the Lord God, but about the idols and gods that the Babylonians worshiped. The king was so angry he ordered his soldiers to kill all of the royal advisors. Even Daniel and his friends were arrested.



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Daniel asked for time so that he could interpret the dream. He asked his friends to pray to the Lord God to help him understand the dream and its meaning. That night God revealed the mystery to Daniel in a vision. Daniel said to the king, “None of the wise men of Babylon could tell you what you dreamed, but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries. He has shown what will happen in the future. You dreamed of a giant statue made of gold, silver, bronze, iron and clay. A rock hit its feet, and it broke into pieces and blew away. Then the rock grew into a mountain. The statue represents your kingdom and the four kingdoms that will come after yours. The rock that destroys them is the kingdom which God will build. It will last forever.”

When King Nebuchadnezzar heard this he bowed low and said, “Your God is the greatest of gods. He made you able to explain this mystery.” The king rewarded Daniel by making him ruler over a large part of Babylon. He also gave Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego special official jobs.

Unfortunately, King Nebuchadnezzar did not completely follow the Lord God. In fact, he made an image out of gold, it was 90 feet high so that it could be seen from far away. He gathered princes, rulers and nobles from the country to dedicate the statue. At the ceremony a servant announced, “The king commands that when the music begins, everyone must bow down and worship the statue. Anyone who does not will be thrown into prison.” Daniel was not at this celebration, but Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were, and they faced another difficult decision. Should they worship the golden statue even though the Lord God forbid them to worship any idol or any god? If they didn’t they would certainly die.

Bear I can’t imagine having to make a decision that would mean death. That’s terrible. What did they do?

TL When the trumpets sounded everyone knelt down and worshiped the golden image, except the three men, they were the only ones not bowing down. Some people who hated the Israelites complained to the king, “Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego disobeyed you! They did not bow down to the statue!”

The king was very angry. He called the three Jewish men to him, “If you don’t bow down, you will be thrown into the furnace right now. There is no god who can save you!”

The men replied, “We are ready to answer you, King. The God we serve is able to save us from the fiery furnace, and we know he will save us. But if it is God’s will that we die, even then we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image you have set up.”

This made the king more furious than he was before. He ordered his servants to make the fire seven times hotter than it was before. Then they tied up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and threw their clothes and all into the furnace. King Nebuchadnezzar stood in front of the furnace and looked into the open door. As he looked, he was filled with wonder at what he saw, he said, “Didn’t we throw three tied men into the fire? Why do I see four untied men walking around in the furnace? And the fourth man looks like a god!” He called to the three men, “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, you who serve the Most High God, come out of the fire.” When they came out everyone could see that they were alive, their clothes and hair had not burned and they didn’t even smell like smoke.

TL Remember this bag of sand is the Israelite young men. (Fill a cup half full of water) This water



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represents the trouble they were in because they refused to worship the statue. (Hold both bags of sand) Remember, this one is Nebuchadnezzar and this one is the Israelites young men. They look the same, they weigh the same, but watch what happens when the young Israelites who place their trust in God find themselves in deep trouble. (Pour special sand into cup. It should pile up in an unusual way.) See how the sand is surrounded by water, just like the young men were surrounded by fire. Now watch what happens. (Pour water out into an empty cup and show that the remaining sand is dry). The sand is protected from the water, just like the Israelites were protected from the fire.

King Nebuchadnezzar said, "Praise the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego! From now on, anyone who says anything bad about their God shall be torn apart. No other god can rescue like this!" Then he gave the men even higher positions in the land of Babylon.

Bear Wow. God can do anything, can't he? They could have died, but instead the whole city turned to God! So cool!

TL Yes, God protected the three men in a miraculous way and brought glory to himself. King Nebuchadnezzar became very successful and his kingdom grew. Unfortunately, with that success came pride. (Pour water into empty cup) One day he was walking on the roof of the palace enjoying the view of Babylon and he said, "I have made Babylon great! I have built it by my power because of my glory and majesty!" (Pour Nebuchadnezzar sand into cup) And at that moment God's protection left Nebuchadnezzar and he was cast out of Babylon. (Shake water and sand to show that the sand is wet) He lived out it the wild like an animal eating grass for 7 years. (Pour water and wet sand into empty cup) Nebuchadnezzar was not protected from trouble by God, his pride got in the way.

(Pour special sand into water again to demonstrate it's protection from water) The young Israelites experienced the miracle of God's protection because they trusted God with their lives.

Bear Wow! That is so cool. I don't know how you did it TL, making waterproof sand. That is amazing. Of course God is even more amazing how he protected Daniel's friends from the fire.

TL It was fun. Thanks for watching. See you later Bear!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Why didn't the Israelite young men want to eat the fancy meat and wine from the king's table?
- What did they eat instead?
- Why didn't King Nebuchadnezzar want to tell his magicians his dream?
- How did Daniel know the dream and its meaning?
- Why did Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refuse to bow down to the golden image?
- What was the consequence?
- How did Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego survive the fire?
- What happened when Nebuchadnezzar started boasting about his amazing kingdom?
- Why wasn't he protected from trouble?



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CRAFTS

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• CRAFT •

OBJECTIVE: LIONS HEAD PILLOW

Objective: Kids will make lion head pillows out of fleece.

MATERIALS PROVIDED BY EM

- Scissors, staplers, hole punches

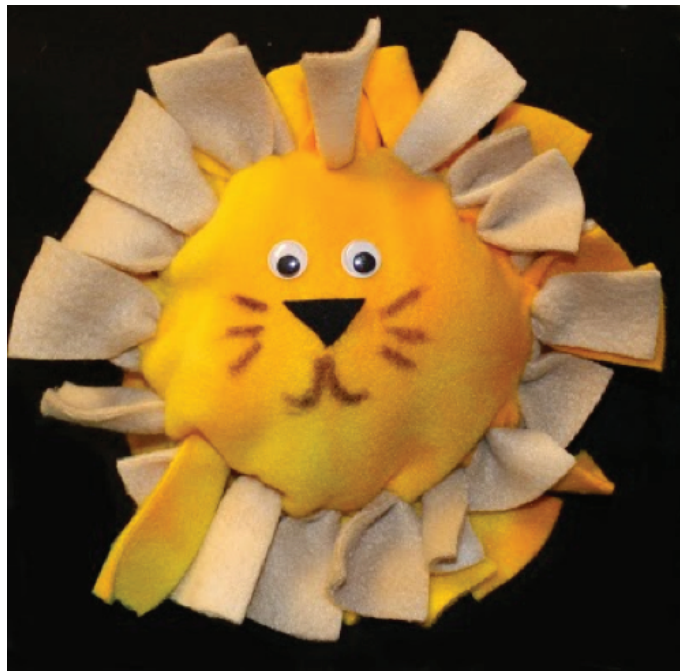
MATERIALS BROUGHT BY TEAM

- Yellow and tan (or orange) fleece precut into 12 inch circles, one of each color per child
(*Precut 24 slits along the edge of the circle, about 2.5 inches deep (so it looks like the sun with rays))
- Tacky glue (optional)
- Wiggly eyes (optional)
- Black sharpie to draw nose and whiskers
- Polyester batting, a couple handfuls per child

DIRECTIONS

- Stack a yellow and tan (or orange) circle
- Tie a yellow strip to a tan strip so there is a knot at the bottom of the fringe
- Continue tying knots all around the circle until there are 4 fringes left
- Stuff the circle with a couple handfuls of stuffing
- Tie off the final 4 fringes
- Glue on wiggly eyes (optional)
- Draw on nose, mouth and whiskers with Sharpie

EXAMPLE





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GAME

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• GAME •

OBJECTIVE: BLANKET VOLLEYBALL

Teams work together to throw and catch a beach ball using a blanket.

MATERIALS BROUGHT BY TEAM

- Two blankets or sheets of the same size
- Beach ball
- Optional - tape or rope for boundary

INSTRUCTIONS

The team should stand around the edge of the blanket, stretching it out so it is tight. The 'serving' team should start by placing the ball on the blanket, loosening then bringing it tight so it 'throws' the ball over the net. The other team then use their blanket to catch the ball then throw it back.

If the group is large consider adding another blanket/sheet or rotating teams of 8-10 kids.

Optional - place a length of rope or tape in the middle of the play area to divide the sides. Score similar to volleyball.

Teams will need to use good communication and observation to throw, run and catch the ball.



