

CAPTIVE IN A FOREIGN LAND

Teacher's Thoughts

Daniel was taken captive and brought to a foreign land. In this new place he was trained in the ways of the Babylonians. He was presented with strange food from the palace. The king even gave him a new name. Daniel had a choice as to how he would handle this situation.

Every child has been in a foreign land at one time. Some may have moved from one place to another. Others have had to deal with situations new to them such as a parents' divorce, a step parent joining the family, a new baby in the home or a change in schools. Whenever Christian kids go into the world whether at the playground, school or in the neighborhood, they are also entering a foreign land. They have a choice. Will they conform to the standards of the land? Or will they hold true to the truth that they know? No matter what foreign land we enter, we always have a choice how we will act in this new place.



Supplies

Obtain & Prepare Before Class

1. PowerPoint CD/DVD
2. Backpack or satchel
3. Gold or silver object (vase, platter, dish...)
4. Misc. items made of gold, silver or bronze (plates, vases, bowls, etc.)
5. Copies of pages 13-22
6. Two thrones (chairs)
7. Clear container
8. Shredded paper
9. One can of silly string
10. Tape

Provided in the Kit

- Treasure chest
- Lock and key
- Pith helmet
- Two swords
- Two crowns
- Handcuffs with key
- Finger trap

The Point:

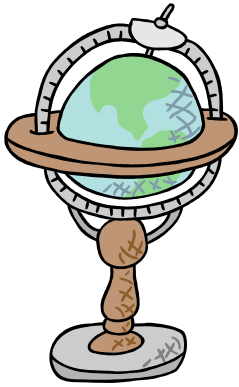
When things go wrong,
we have a choice how
we will respond.

The Bible Story:

Daniel Taken Captive
Daniel 1:1-7

The Verse:

When troubles come
your way, consider it an
opportunity for great
joy. For you know that
when your faith is
tested, your endurance
has a chance to grow.
James 1:2,3



(pp) Dr. Jones

Supplies: None

(Comes in out of breath.)

Whew! That was a close one. Just tangled with a Black Mamba. (Sees kids.) Oh, hello there. Have you ever seen a Black Mamba before? It is a big, black snake. Not a pretty sight! And very, very poisonous. You don't want to meet up with one of those babies in the jungle.

I am Dr. Jones. Born adventurer, worldwide traveler, finder of lost valuable artifacts, escapee of many life-threatening situations. I suppose you have read about me in the newspaper? No? How about on the nightly news? No? The radio? No? Well, regardless, I am here to invite you on my latest adventure. Who would like to accompany me to the land of Babylon? I want to dig up some treasures in that area. Have you heard of Babylon? You won't find it on a map today. It sat on the Euphrates River, just under an hour drive from Baghdad, Iraq.

I will prepare the gear for this new adventure. But beware, for it is a hot, dry place. So bring lots of water and a good head covering to protect you from the sand. You don't want to miss this adventure!



(PP) Puppet Song

“A Great Big God” from Great Big God produced by Vineyard Music, 2001.

Professor Diggs

Supplies: Backpack or satchel, pith helmet, gold or silver object (vase, platter, dish...)

(PP) Good day to you. Allow me to introduce myself. I am Professor Diggs, friend of that rascal adventurer Dr. Jones. He asked me to drop by to show you some of my archeological finds. I am on quite a dig these days, exploring the ancient land of Babylon. Would you like to view my latest find?

(Call up a child. Reach in the satchel and pull out the gold or silver item. Have the child hold it.)



Very valuable I would say. (Looks it over well and points out anything interesting on it.) I was digging about the Euphrates River when something caught my eye. It was just a small speck of a shiny item. On further investigation, I ran into this. I will have to do some further study on this item to determine how old it is. However, it does remind me of the items that used to be in the temple in Jerusalem. They were stolen when King Nebuchadnezzar invaded the country. I just wonder if this could be one of the rare and valuable things from the temple. I will take them to the museum and do research to find out.

(Packs item into bag.)

I had better be going. I have much work to do before answers are found. Then, back to the dig. Perhaps I will visit you again with one of my extraordinary finds. Good day to you. (Bows to audience.)

Bible Story

(PP)

Supplies: Copies of (page 13-20) front to back, copy of king's names (page 22 & 23), 2 swords, 2 crowns, 2 thrones (chairs), misc. items made of gold, silver or bronze (plates, vases, bowls, etc.)

Preparation: Place two chairs on opposite sides of the room. Place the kings names on the chairs and put the gold, silver and bronze items near king Jehoiakim's chair.

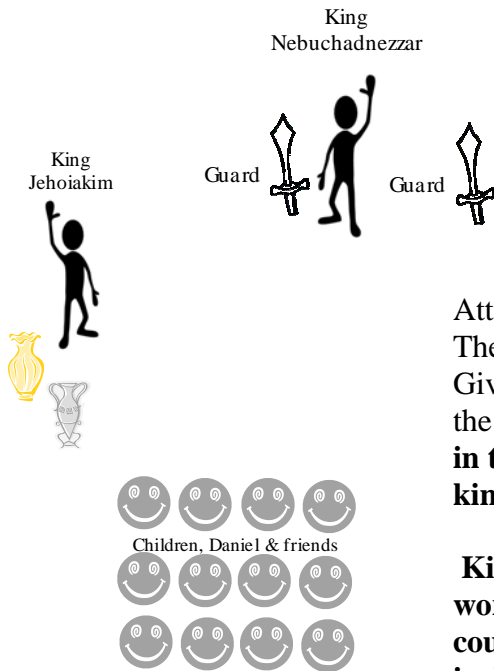
Daniel was a boy that lived a long time ago. He lived 600 years before Jesus came to earth. Which means he lived 2,600 years ago! That is a long time. Daniel was a Jew who lived in Jerusalem. When he was born, King Josiah was the ruler. He was a godly ruler, wanting to please God. He wanted everyone who lived in his country to live godly lives. This is how Daniel grew up. He learned to serve God and to do what was right. He learned to pray. He learned how to worship God. And he learned that there is only one God. When Daniel was a teenager, King Josiah died and new, ungodly kings came into power. Daniel clung to what he knew was right. He had learned all about God, probably from his parents, and he did not abandon his belief just because things had changed.

Then something terrible happened in Daniel's life. I am going to need some help as I tell what happened next.



Choose the following characters:

- Daniel
- Hananiah
- Mishael
- Azariah
- King Nebuchadnezzar
- King Jehoiakim
- Ashpenaz
- Two soldiers



Attach the name tags on Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and king's heads. They should sit on their thrones (chairs) on opposite ends of the room. Give the soldiers swords and place them on either side of King (Look at the kids in the audience.) **The rest of you are people who live in Judah, in the city of Jerusalem. King Jehoiakim is your king. Wave to your king!**

King Nebuchadnezzar was not a very kind ruler. He certainly did not worship God. He decided that it was time to take over another country. So he instructed his soldiers to go and capture Judah which included the city of Jerusalem from King Jehoiakim.

The army from Babylon came into Judah and captured it. (Soldiers stand by the people.) They not only captured the country, but they entered the temple and took some of the sacred objects from the Temple of God. (Have the soldiers gather the gold, silver and bronze items and place them somewhere out of sight.) King Nebuchadnezzar brought these treasures back to his land and placed them in the treasure house of his god. Imagine, sacred objects taken from the temple of our God and placed in the temple of this false god. What a terrible event!

Some of Judah's royal family was brought to Babylon as captives. King Nebuchadnezzar called his chief of staff, Ashpenaz and gave him a big job to do. He told him, "I want some of the young men from the captives. Select only strong, healthy, and good looking young men." Ashpenaz went out among the captives, looking for strong, healthy and good looking young men. (Have him choose the four boys with the name tags.) When he found them, he brought them to a place where they would be trained. The King had instructed him to teach them all they would need to know to serve in the royal palace. They were also to learn the language and literature of Babylon. The king also assigned all the young men food and wine from his own kitchens. He gave them three years to be trained the way he wanted them trained. These four teens were not the only ones trained; there were many more young men.

King Nebachadnezzar decided that they needed new names. The chief of staff renamed them. (Have the chief of staff flip over the cards as you name them.) **Daniel, which means “God is judge” had his name changed to Belteshazzar. Hananiah, which means “Jehovah is gracious”, had his name changed to Shadrach. Mishael, meaning, “Who is what God is?” became Meshach. And Azariah, meaning “the Lord helps” became Abednego. All of these young men had names that honored God. When their names were changed, they changed them to Babylonian names, many of them honoring false gods.**

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There they were in a foreign land. Kidnapped from their own land and torn away from their families. And now they were being changed into Babylonians. They had to learn the language and the culture. They were supposed to eat their food. And they were even given new names. They must have felt like everything was out of their control. They were basically slaves, at the mercy of the king. What could they do about their situation? It might seem like nothing.

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However, they had a choice. No matter what happens, no one can take away your faith in God. They could choose to keep honoring God and trusting Him. Or they could choose to conform to the world around them. In the next two months, we will learn about the choices that they made. (Thank the actors and have them sit down.)

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What about you? Do you ever feel like you live in a foreign land? Sometimes things happen such as moving to a new neighborhood or a divorce in your family. Maybe you have a new family member living with you. Or maybe a grandparent died. Maybe you get made fun of at school. Whatever hard thing you might go through, it can feel like being in a foreign land. You have a choice just like Daniel and his friends. You can choose to trust God, you can choose to have a bad attitude, feel sorry for yourself or have ungodly thoughts and behavior. What will your choice be?

Prayer

During prayer time, have the children consider their choices. Are they committed to trusting God when things go wrong? Pray and ask God to give them the strength to do so. Also, if there are children that have never put their trust in God, this would be a good time to invite children to do so.

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(pp) Application

Supplies: None



I want everyone to stand up. We are going to play “Follow the Leader.” Whatever I do, I want you to do. (Start by doing simple actions such as putting your hand on your head or jumping on one foot. Gradually start getting faster and doing “crazier” actions.)

Could you keep up with me? Did you want to do everything that I did? Did you have to do each one of the motions? You had a choice, didn’t you? You could do the motion or not do it.

Sometimes in life we play follow the leader with the people around us. Whatever the leader does, we follow. Now there are some people we should follow, like our parents. We should obey our parents. However, there are some people we need to be careful about following. They can influence us to do things we should not do. Remember you always have a choice. Be careful when you are in a foreign land. Be careful that you are always following God. Satan would love for you to follow him. When we decide to do wrong things we are not following God. When we make bad choices we are not following God. Always be careful who you are following.



(pp) Dr. Jones Challenge

Supplies: Clear container, shredded paper, one can of silly string, tape, handcuffs with key, treasure chest key

Preparation: On one piece of paper, write the word “perfect”. Tape the key to the handcuffs on the piece of paper. Spray the silly string into the container and mix strips of paper with it.

(Choose three children to come to the front. Have them sit on the three chairs at the front.)

The first person to answer the following question correctly will get an opportunity to try and meet Dr. Jones’ Challenge. The first one to jump up after I read the question gets a chance at it. If the first one up misses, the second one up gets to guess. When you think you know the answer be sure to jump up.

Question: What was the name of the king that captured Judah?

Answer: King Nebuchadnezzar

Have the winner come over to the container of paper and silly string. Tape the key to the handcuffs to the back of the winner. Choose the second person that jumped up to be handcuffed. Have the handcuffed child stand beside the treasure chest.

You will have 30 seconds to complete the challenge.

Just as King Nebuchadnezzar sent his chief of staff out to find perfect young men, you are going to have to find a piece of paper that says perfect. On that piece of paper, the key to the handcuffs will be taped. Once you have found the key, you must run over to the handcuffed child and open the handcuffs so he/she can un-tape the key on your back and hand it to you. You will then open the treasure chest.

Treasure

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Supplies: Treasure chest with lock, finger trap (one per child if giving away a prize)

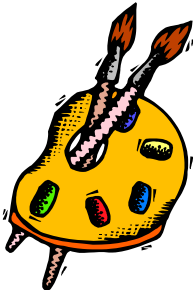
Have the person who opened the treasure chest pull out the treasure.

Does anyone know what this is? It is called a finger trap. Choose a child to come up front. Place your pointer fingers in the ends of the trap. Now, try to pull them out at the same time. Are you trapped? Now push in with both fingers just a bit. Now try to remove one finger. You were not really trapped were you?

Sometimes in life, we think we are trapped and do not have a choice. However, as long as we trust in God, we are never truly trapped. We always have a choice how we will handle hard situations. When you take these finger traps today, remember that you will always have a choice how you will react. You are not trapped!



Time stretchers



Craft Activity

Supplies: Clay, pointed sticks (wooden skewers), cuneiform chart (page 12)

Daniel and his friends learned literature (stories) that would have been written during ancient Babylonian times on clay tablets using a writing called cuneiform. Cuneiform was a wedged type writing that resulted from pressing the end of a reed stem into wet clay.

Purchase a self-hardening clay or use the recipe below to make clay. In the schools, the boys had to knead the clay and then make their own tablets. Have the children do this. Give the children the sticks and the cuneiform letter chart and have them press their initials into the clay. The alphabet is different than our alphabet so the children can make up their own cuneiform letters for the letters that are not on the chart. The clay tablets will take 3-5 days to dry.

Clay Recipe

Materials: 1 cup flour, 1 cup water, ½ cup salt, 1 tsp vegetable oil, ½ teaspoon cream of tartar

Mix all ingredients together in a saucepan and cook over medium heat until the mixture holds together (keep mixing or it will stick to the bottom of the pan). When the clay is cool enough to touch, knead it on a floured surface. Store it in an air-tight container.

Memory Verse



Supplies: paper, pencil or paintbrush and paint

“When troubles come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow.” James 1:2,3

Write Bible verse in picture writing using either pencil or paint and a paintbrush. Have the children think of a picture that goes with each main word of the verse. For instance, the word “troubles” might be a sad face. The word “joy” might be a smiley face. You may want to shorten the verse depending on the age of the children writing it.

Dr. Jones

(Comes in out of breath)

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I will prepare the gear for this new adventure. But beware, for it is a hot, dry place. So bring lots of water and a good head covering to protect you from the sand. You don't want to miss this adventure!

(Dr. Jones music plays as he leaves.)

Professor Diggs

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(Packs item into bag.)

I had better be going. I have much work to do before answers are found. Then, back to the dig. Perhaps I will visit you again with one of my extraordinary finds. Good day to you. (Bows to audience.)

Cuneiform Chart

a, ā	i, ī	u, ū	k, ka	k, ku	g, ga	g, gu	ḥ, ḥa	č, ča	ġ, ġa	ġ, ġi	t, ta
t, tu	d, da	d, di	d, du	q, qa	p, pa	b, ba	f, fa	n, na	n, nú	m, ma	m, mí
m, mū	y, ya	w, wa	w, wi	r, ra	r, ru	l, la	s, sa	z, za	š, ša	qr, qra	h, ha

a, ā	i, ī	u, ū	k, ka	k, ku	g, ga	g, gu	ḥ, ḥa	č, ča	ġ, ġa	ġ, ġi	t, ta
t, tu	d, da	d, di	d, du	q, qa	p, pa	b, ba	f, fa	n, na	n, nú	m, ma	m, mí
m, mū	y, ya	w, wa	w, wi	r, ra	r, ru	l, la	s, sa	z, za	š, ša	qr, qra	h, ha

leisure

Belteshazzar

Harvard

shadrrach

Mishrae

Meshach

Azarihan

Abbednego

King Jehoiakim

King Nebuchadnezzar



Together Time

1
Captive

The Point

When things go wrong,
we have a choice how we
will respond.

The Verse

When troubles come your
way, consider it an
opportunity for great
joy. For you know that
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tested, your endurance
has a chance to grow.
James 1:2,3

The Bible Story

Daniel and friends taken
captive Daniel 1:1-7

Discussion Questions

- King Nebuchadnezzar tried to lure the boys away from doing what was right. Do you have anything in your life that lures you away?
- What about television? Does it ever lure you away from living right?
- Do you have any friends that lure you away? Anything else you can think of?

Family Fun

Find out what each person's name means in your family.
Were your family members named with the meaning in mind?
Would anyone change their name if they could?
Just for fun, change everyone's name for the day.
Can everyone remember what to call each other?

Cooking With Your Child

Plan a king's feast for supper. Talk about the kinds
of things your child would serve if he were king.

