

Lesson One: Decide Now to Stand Strong (Preschool)

Lesson Theme

I will love God and will always try to obey God's rules.

Theme Verse

“. . . Daniel was determined not to violate God's law and defile himself . . .”
(Daniel 1:8 VOICE)

“. . . Daniel resolved not to defile himself . . .” (Daniel 1:8 NIV)

“Daniel decided to obey God” (Paraphrase)

Bible Story - Daniel in the Lions' Den

Ice Breaker Questions

Start the class time with the 'What is your name?' (Activity Sheet 1.1)

What You Need:

- Self-adhesive name tags (enough for two per student)
- Copies of Activity Sheet 1.1 and washable markers
- Crayons or colored pencils

What To Do:

- Print each student's name on a self-adhesive name tag and apply the tag to their clothes.
- Read all the names as you greet the students, complimenting each name, such as “Jennifer is such a pretty name!” or “I like your name, Richard. Did you know that there have been kings with your name?” or “Susanna, did you know your name is in the Bible?” Show them your name and let them know how you wish to be addressed . . . such as “Mrs. Ruth” or “Mr. Dan.”

- Ask them if they like their names, or would they like to have another name?
- Then explain, “Today we are going to meet Daniel, a boy in the Bible who had to leave his home and go to another country and was given a new name! And he probably didn’t like his new name very much because it was strange . . . Belteshazzar!!! Who would like a name like that? We’re gonna call him by his real name . . . Daniel.”
- Give each student a copy of Activity Sheet 1.1 and another self-adhesive name tag with the name “Daniel” written on it. Adhere the name tag to the coloring page of Daniel.
- Provide crayons and let the students color the picture of Daniel.

Application

- While they are coloring, set the stage for the story by asking the Ice Breaker Questions.
 - What is Daniel doing in this picture?
 - Why do you think Daniel liked to pray?
- Make the point that Daniel loved God and always wanted to obey Him.

Active Listening Activity

What You Need:

- *One red headband and three black headbands*
- *Crowns can be poster board/cardstock crowns covered in aluminum foil, or even Burger King crowns with name glued on the front.*

Before sharing the Bible story, assign the following characters and props to students in your group:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1) King Nebuchadnezzar – King of Babylon | Crown w/his name on it. |
| 2) Daniel – Jewish teenager | Red Headband |
| 3) Daniel’s Friends – Jewish teenager | Black Headband |
| 4) Chief Ashpenaz – Babylonian official | Toy sword |
| Guards – assigned to Daniel and his friends | Toy swords |

Notes:

- If 'Nebuchadnezzar' is too difficult to say, just call him the 'King,' and if 'Ashpenaz' is too difficult, just call him the 'Chief Guard.'
- If you want to involve more students, you may assign more students to be Daniel's friends or guards. You will need enough props for each student to have the correct prop.
- Swords can be purchased at any discount 'dollar' store or made from simple household items.

As you tell the following story, each character should stand when the story mentions that character. Use a pointer to point out (or tap) the appropriate characters to stand, then use a downward motion to indicate when they should be seated. The constant up-and-down movement is intentional and should add to the fun. A plus sign (+) in the story indicates movement of the characters.

Daniel I (*Paraphrase*)

When Daniel (+) was a boy, he lived in a country called Judah. All of the people in that country were called Jews, so that means that Daniel was a Jew. One day, a really big, mean country called Babylon decided to send a lot of soldiers and take over the country of Judah. The leader of Babylon was King Nebuchadnezzar. (+) So King Nebuchadnezzar and all his soldiers rode into Judah and captured the people. (*all seated*)

King Nebuchadnezzar (+) had a soldier called Ashpenaz. (+) The king told Ashpenaz to find some boys in Judah and bring them to Babylon so they could be trained to work in the king's castle. The king told Ashpenaz to only choose strong, handsome and smart boys. (*both seated*)

One of those boys was named Daniel, and he had three friends that went with him. (+) When they finally reached Babylon, Ashpenaz (+) put the four boys in school so that they would be like other boys in Babylon.

Chief Ashpenaz also changed their names to Babylonian names! Daniel's name was changed to Belshazzar! But we will still call him Daniel! (*all seated*)

Daniel and his friends (+) were also given meat and wine and other foods from the king's (+) own dinner table. This was the best food in the land, because it was the king's food! (*King seated*)

Daniel and his friends saw that this was not healthy food, and God had told them not to eat this food! Daniel had made up his mind that he would not disobey God, so they said, “We can’t eat that food!”

They went to Ashpenaz (+) and asked if they could just have vegetables to eat and water to drink. Now Ashpenaz really liked Daniel and his friends, and really wanted to help them, but he was worried that the king (+) would be angry if he did not follow the rules! So Ashpenaz said, “I cannot change the king’s rules.” (*King seated*)

So Daniel asked again if they could eat vegetables and drink water for only ten days. Daniel said that they would be stronger and healthier if they could only eat veggies and water for ten days. So the guard said, “yes,” and that’s what they did! They ate veggies and drank water for 10 days. (*Ashpenaz seated*)

Guess what happened after 10 days? They were stronger and healthier than all the other boys! And they were smarter than the other boys, too! Because God made them stronger and smarter! (*all seated*)

Ashpenaz (+) brought Daniel and his friends (+) in to see the king. (+) The king sat down and talked to Daniel and his friends, and the king said that they were the smartest of all the kids, and he wanted them to work in the castle with the king! So Daniel and his friends obeyed God, and ate the healthy foods, and God made them strong and smart! It’s always good to obey God!

Recommended Repeat: if time permits, you can repeat the story, since the students will better understand their roles after an initial practice run. Also, you might wish to change the characters for the second run.

Review Questions - “Who said?”

Use the following questions to review the story with the students:

- Who said, “I am a boy and I live in Judah”? (Daniel)
- Who said, “I am coming to capture Judah with my soldiers”? (King)
- Who said, “Daniel, you and your friends are coming with me to Babylon”? (Ashpenaz)
- Who said, “I am going to change your name”? (Ashpenaz)

- Who said, “I have made up my mind. I will obey God”? (Daniel)
- Who said, “We can’t eat that food”? (Daniel)
- Who said, “You have to eat that food because I can’t change the king’s rules”? (Ashpenaz)
- Who said, “Please, can we just eat veggies and drink water for 10 days?” (Daniel)
- Who said, “OK, you can eat veggies and drink water for just 10 days”? (Ashpenaz – *technically, the guard, but they were all guards of Daniel & friends*)
- Who said, “I will take you to see the king, because you are so smart and healthy”? (Ashpenaz)
- Who said, “You boys are smarter than all the other kids. I want you to come to my castle and work for me”? (King)

An easier version of these questions might be more appropriate:

- Who said, “I wear the crown”? (the king)
- Who said, “You have to eat this food”? (the guard)
- Who said, “I won’t eat that food”? (Daniel)
- Who said, “Please, may we have veggies and water”? (Daniel)
- Who said, “You are the strongest and smartest kids in my castle”? (Daniel)

Activities & Games

God’s Rules (Application Activity)

What You Need:

- A sturdy ruler with attached clothespins. Use glue or hot glue to attach the clothespins to the ruler. If you want, use the title at the top of Activity Sheet 1.2 as a label to be glued on the ruler.
- Print out Activity Sheet 1.2 on card stock and cut out the images.

How to Play:

- Ask the students if they know some of God’s rules? Then say, “These are some of God’s rules for us.”
- As you name a rule, let someone clip the image onto the ruler.
 - “God’s most important rule is to love God with all your heart”

- “God says that we should love other people.”
 - “God’s rules say that we should obey our parents and be nice to them”
 - “God says that we should always go to church.”
 - “God says to tell the truth.”
 - “God says to read the Bible so we will learn about Him.”
- After completing the activity, repeat the process, but this time you let the students remember and tell God’s rules. Example: “What is God’s rule about church?” Then let a student clip the image on the yardstick.

Craft Project: Daniel Food Basket

What You Need:

- Crayons or washable markers
- Paper plates and glue
- Print out a copy of Activity Sheet 1.3 for each child on card stock.

How to Make It:

- Cut a paper plate in half. Cut the inside of a second paper plate, leaving the rim.
- Glue one of the paper plate halves to the bottom of the plate rim. Glue the other half to the other side of the rim.
- Paint or color the assembled paper plate basket brown. You can also decorate the basket with a weaving pattern using brown construction paper.
- If desired, all the previous steps could be completed in advance.
- Color and cut out all of the fruits and vegetables.
- Glue the fruit and vegetable pieces inside the basket. Make sure that you can see all the fruits and vegetables sticking out of the basket.

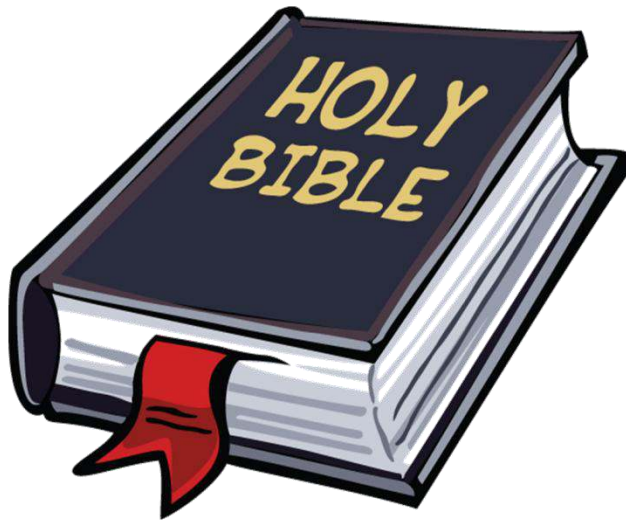
Activity Sheets/Coloring Pages

- 1.1 – “What Is Your Name” Coloring Sheet
- 1.2 – “God’s Rules” Activity
- 1.3 – “Daniel’s Food Basket” Craft Project
- 1.4 – “Choose to Obey God” Coloring Sheet

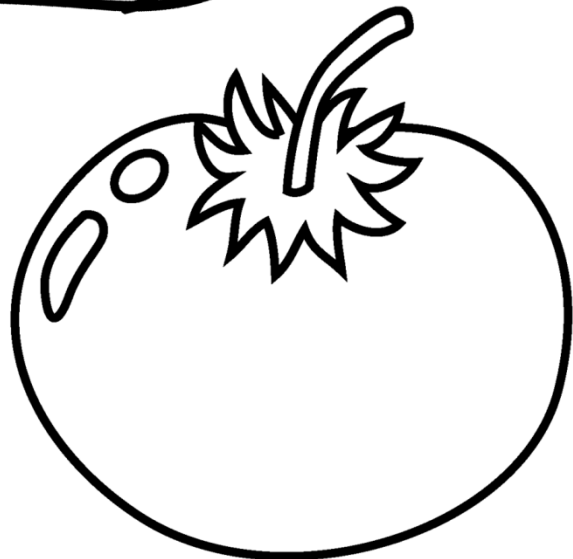
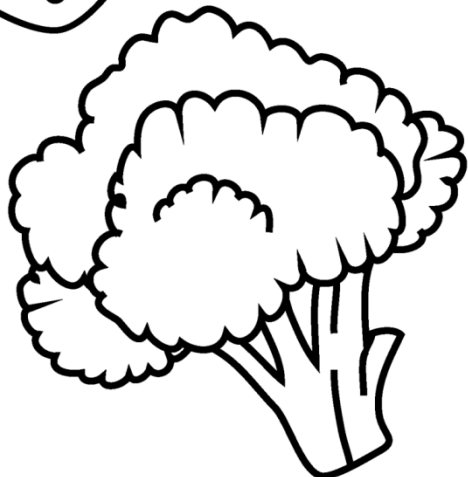
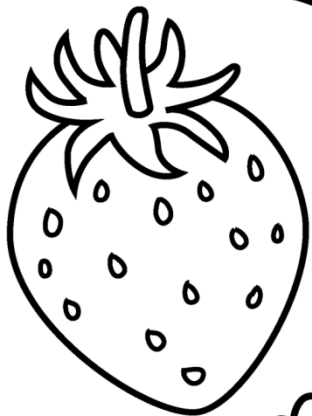
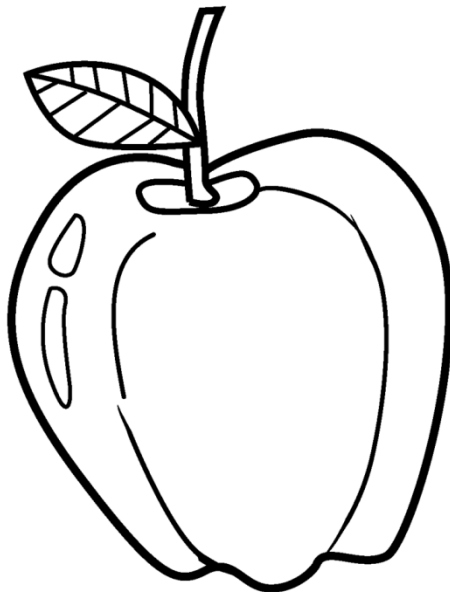
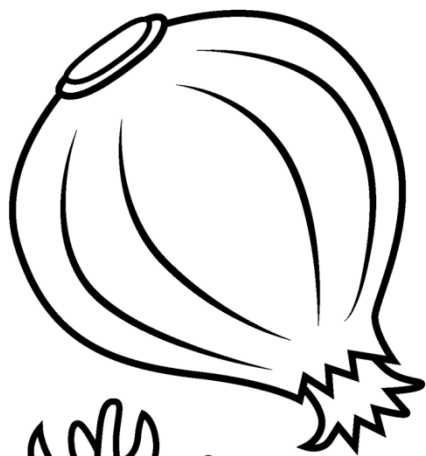
WHAT IS YOUR NAME?



GOD'S RULES



Daniel's Fruits and Veggies





Daniel
and his friends
choose to
obey God!