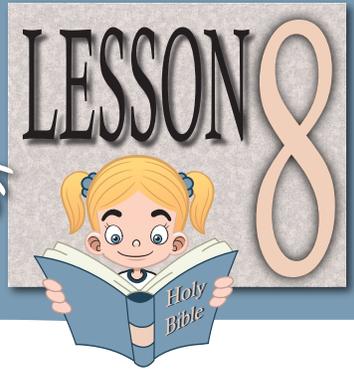


# Daniel and Three Friends in Babylon

## 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.

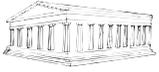
Jehoiakim did not try to follow God like his father Josiah did. In fact, the year after Nebuchadnezzar first came to Palestine and made Jehoiakim pay tribute, Jehoiakim received a written message from Jeremiah with instructions and warnings from God. Jehoiakim's response was to cut the message into small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

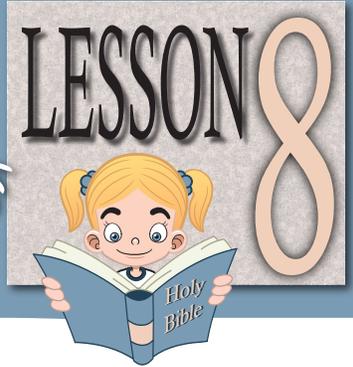
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# Daniel Interprets

## 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.

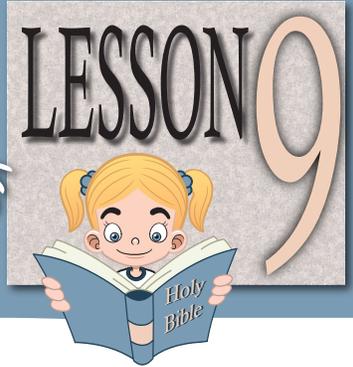
**\*\*\* IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS PERTAINING TO THIS LESSON, PLEASE CLICK THE “SUGGESTION” BUTTON BESIDE THE BUTTON FOR THIS LESSON ON THE CURRICULUM WEB SITE.**





# Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego Stand Up for God

## Daniel 3



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 3; Psalm 68:19-20

### MEMORY WORK:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: "Our God...will deliver us" (Daniel 3:17b).

OLDER CHILDREN: "O king, ...we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up" (Daniel 3:18b).

### 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.

- ["The Fiery Furnace"](#)
- ["Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego"](#)
- ["Someone's in the Fiery Furnace"](#)

### 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
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- ["Maps of Babylonian and Persian Empires in Daniel's Time"](#) (provided in map section of curriculum Web site)
- Fiery Furnace images: <http://www.christart.com/clipart/image/fiery-furnace>; <http://www.goodsalt.com>



## PERSONAL APPLICATION:

I must be willing to stand up for God even when it is not popular.

## LESSON STARTS HERE

### INTRODUCTION: (YOUNGER CHILDREN)

Review last week's lesson.

What are the names of the four young men we learned about last week? What choices did they make that pleased God? What do you think you would do if a king told you to do something that was wrong? In today's lesson, we will learn how Daniel's three friends refused to worship an idol King Nebuchadnezzar commanded them to worship. Let's see what happens!

### INTRODUCTION: (OLDER CHILDREN)

Review last week's lesson.

Has anyone ever made fun of you because you believe in God, or because you go to church and choose to do what's right? Many times, in both the Old and New Testaments, God's followers were not only made fun of. Many times they were even killed. Today, we're going to talk about Daniel's three friends being willing to do what was right, even when their lives were threatened.

### POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

**HISTORICAL NOTE:** These events probably took place around 584 B.C., about 20 years after Shadrach, Meshach, Abed-Nego, and Daniel were taken to Babylon as slaves. Ezekiel was also taken captive in the last and largest deportation; he was chosen by God to be a prophet among his fellow captives in Babylon.

When Nebuchadnezzar conquered Judah, he took away their soldiers (i.e., the Jews' way of fighting back), their leaders, and all the symbols of their religion (stealing the objects in the Temple and, later, destroying the Temple itself). The golden image that Nebuchadnezzar had built to honor himself was no doubt made from the gold he had taken from Judah and other nations he had conquered.

1. Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, had a giant statue made of gold that was about 90 feet tall and nine feet wide. He had it set up in a plain where a multitude of people could come and worship before it. All the officials of the Babylonian Empire were called to worship this golden statue. They were ordered to bow down to the statue when they heard certain musical instruments play.
2. If anyone refused to fall down and worship the statue, the king ordered that person to be thrown into a fiery furnace. Of the crowd gathered that day, only three men refused to bow down. Some of his officials told Nebuchadnezzar, "There are certain Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon [Daniel 2:49], Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego; these men...do not serve your gods or worship the gold image which you have set up" (Daniel 3:12).



3. Even though he had appointed these men, along with Daniel, to positions of authority in his government and had previously said, “Truly your God is the God of gods, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets” (Daniel 2:47), Nebuchadnezzar was very angry that these three Jews would not bow down to the idol he had made. [He was quick to anger, as noted in Daniel 2:12 and 3:13,19. His question, “and what god is there who can deliver you out of my hands?” is reminiscent of Pharaoh’s rhetorical question: “Who is Jehovah that I should obey Him?”]
4. The king’s questions in Daniel 3:14,15 indicate that he knew why these three men did not bow down to his image. Their allegiance was promised to someone else—the one and only God whom the great king of Babylon did not know or fear.
5. Nebuchadnezzar said that he would give them another chance to obey his command, warning them that no god could deliver them from his hands. They answered him, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you [i.e., defend ourselves] in this matter. If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king” (vss. 16-17). Though they knew God was able to save them, they knew that He might choose not to save them for His own reasons. Regardless of God’s decision, however, they confidently and boldly stated to the king, “Let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up” (vs. 18). The three men’s unshakable confidence and faith in Jehovah God (Daniel 3:17-18) only made the king angrier. [Similar to Peter and John’s defiant statement to Jewish leaders in Acts 4:19,20,29]
6. The king ordered the furnace to be heated seven times hotter than it was normally. Think about how Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego had to stand and watch the wood put into the oven until it became so hot that it killed anyone who approached it. The three men were securely tied up and thrown into the furnace, but there were no cries of agony or cries for help. Instead, the king quickly stood up and looked into the furnace where he saw three unbound men walking among the flames. Not only that, but another figure, who the king said was “like a son of the gods” was also in the furnace. Completely astounded, the king, himself, approached the hot furnace and told the men to come out, calling them “servants of the Most High God.”

**NOTE:** The text does not make it clear who was sent by God to rescue Daniel’s friends. The king sees someone that he concludes is a “son of the gods” (“gods” is a translation of the Hebrew word *elohim*, which can refer to God or to gods). Some translations say “the Son of God,” insisting that it was Jesus incarnate Who saved the boys. However, the underlying Hebrew does not demand that translation (e.g., “the” is not in the Hebrew and the phrase “a son of god/the gods” is a semitism which refers to angelic beings elsewhere—Job 1:6; 38:7), and since Nebuchadnezzar had not believed in God to that point (3:15), it is unlikely to conclude that he would have even known about Jesus, much less believed the savior of the boys was Jesus. Further, Nebuchadnezzar would not have known what the Son of God would have looked like to describe the being that way. Rather, it is likely that what he saw was an angelic being. As a polytheist, when thinking about angels, instead of calling them “sons of God,” he likely would have thought of them as “sons of gods.” In verse 28, Nebuchadnezzar says the boys’ God “sent His angel and delivered His servants who trusted in Him,” (1) indicating that he meant “angel” by “a son of the gods,” and (2) indicating that he knew it was their God (singular) responsible for their salvation, possibly indicating that he had a better understanding of what happened by that point. Likely, the boys had explained who had delivered them after exiting the furnace.





**RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS:** See the article “[Guardian Angels](#)” by Eric Lyons on the Apologetics Press Web site for a discussion of angels in the Bible, including the angel God sent to rescue Shadrach, Meshack, and Abed-nego.

7. Note verse 27: The king was astounded that the three were completely untouched by the fire. The king had no power at all against Almighty God! Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego knew that even if they were to die, God would reward them and care for them. They knew they could believe God’s promises to care for them and did their part by choosing to show their love for God instead of an idol.
8. If you are ever in a crowd where everyone else makes a bad choice, that doesn’t mean that you have to follow their example. Instead, you must choose to be different and hope they will follow your example. There have been many times that people who obeyed God have suffered for their faith; they were not always protected from physical harm. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego knew this and knew that they would serve God no matter what might happen to them. We must do the same.

**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 Refuse Idols Coloring Sheet](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- Make red and orange Jello® in shallow pans; when set, cut into “flames.” Use canned whipped cream to spray on the flames to “put the fire out.”
- Act out the story. Tape orange, red, and yellow crepe streamers to the edges of a box fan. Turn on the fan to make the “flames” move. Ask some of the children to make sizzling noises and some to crush aluminum foil for the crackling sound of flames. Let some of the children dress up like the three Jewish men and the king.
- Make copies of a coloring sheet of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the fiery furnace for each child. Write the memory verse on the paper. Let the children color their sheets, then glue pieces of red, yellow, and orange tissue paper onto the paper to represent flames.

**1st-2nd Graders:**

- Memory Verse review: Write each word of the memory verse on an index card. Shuffle the cards and have children work in pairs or groups to put the cards in the correct order. Make as many sets as you have groups. (“[Memory Verse Cards](#)” provided in activity sheets)
- Memory Game: Write key words from this and last week’s lessons on index cards or pieces of card stock (each word written on two different cards). Shuffle the cards and turn them face down on the floor. Have the children take turns turning over pairs of cards. If a match is not found, turn the cards face down in the same place they were. If a match is found, the child keeps the match and tells the importance of that word. (You can make two sets and divide the class into two groups to play.)
- Sword Drill: Make sure each child has a Bible. Call out scriptures that are relevant for this lesson, one at a time, for children to look up. The first one to find the scripture gets to read it out loud. Suggestion: for this lesson, use verses on idols/idol worship. Example verses:

Exodus 20:3-5; Exodus 32:7-10; Joshua 24:14; 1 Samuel 7:3-4; 1 Kings 11:4; 2 Kings 17:16,18; 1 Corinthians 5:11; 1 Corinthians 10:14; 1 John 5:21; 1 Thessalonians 1:9; Numbers 25:3

- [“Daniel and Friends Refuse Idols Matching Activity”](#) (provided in activity sheets)

### 3rd-4th Graders:

- Memory Verse review: Write each word of the memory verse on an index card. Shuffle the cards and have children work in pairs or groups to put the cards in the correct order. Make as many sets as you have groups. ([“Memory Verse Cards”](#) provided in activity sheets)
- Memory Game: Write key words from this and last week’s lessons on index cards or pieces of card stock (each word written on two different cards). Shuffle the cards and turn them face down on the floor. Have the children take turns turning over pairs of cards. If a match is not found, turn the cards face down in the same place they were. If a match is found, the child keeps the match and tells the importance of that word. (You can make two sets and divide the class into two groups to play.)
- Sword Drill: Make sure each child has a Bible. Call out scriptures that are relevant for this lesson, one at a time, for children to look up. The first one to find the scripture gets to read it out loud. Suggestion: for this lesson, use verses on idols/idol worship. Example verses: Exodus 20:3-5; Exodus 32:7-10; Joshua 24:14; 1 Samuel 7:3-4; 1 Kings 11:4; 2 Kings 17:16,18; 1 Corinthians 5:11; 1 Corinthians 10:14; 1 John 5:21; 1 Thessalonians 1:9; Numbers 25:3
- [“Daniel and Friends Refuse Idols Matching Activity”](#) (provided in activity sheets)
- Have the children read the following:
  - Daniel 3-4
  - *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.”)
  - *King Nebuchadnezzar’s Golden Statue*, by Penny Frank, The Lion Story Bible (DISCLAIMER: mark out the first sentence of the second paragraph on p. 9)
  - *The Fiery Furnace*, by Melinda Kay Busch, Arch Books (DISCLAIMER: skip the note to the parents)

### SONGS:

#### “THE FIERY FURNACE” ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Lora Laycook  
(Tune: “London Bridge”)

Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, Abednego, Abednego,  
Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, in the fiery furnace.

No, they did not burn at all, burn at all, burn at all.  
No, they did not burn at all; our God saved them.

**“SHADRACH, MESHACH, AND ABEDNEGO” ([Click to Hear](#))**

Author: Lora Laycook

(Tune: “Are You Sleeping?”)

*(Let each of the children pretend to be one of the three men.)*

Class: Shadrach, Shadrach, Shadrach, Shadrach,  
Where are you? Where are you?

Shadrach: In the fiery furnace, in the fiery furnace,  
Here I am, here I am.

Class: Shadrach, Shadrach, Shadrach, Shadrach,  
Who saved you? Who saved you?

Shadrach: God, up in heaven, God, up in heaven,  
He saved me, He saved me.

(REPEAT verses with names of other characters)

**“SOMEONE’S IN THE FIERY FURNACE” ([Click to Hear](#))**

Author: Unknown\*

*(from Tip Toe Through the Bible with Tunes)*

(Tune: “Someone’s in the Kitchen with Dinah”)

Someone’s in the fiery furnace,  
Someone’s in the fiery furnace I see,  
Thrown into the white-hot furnace,  
Do I see more than three?

Four in the fiery furnace,  
Four men in the furnace I see,  
With the men in the furnace  
Is God protecting three?

CHORUS:

Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego,  
Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego,  
Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego,  
There’s one more in the glow.

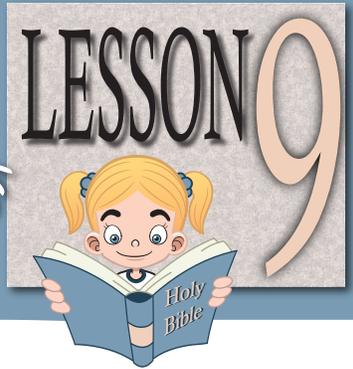
\*Author Unknown: Please contact us through the feedback button for this lesson if you are aware of any copyright information for this song.

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



# Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego Stand Up for God

## Daniel 3



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 3; 4; Psalm 68:19-20

### MEMORY WORK:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: "Our God...will deliver us" (Daniel 3:17b).

OLDER CHILDREN: "O king, ...we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up" (Daniel 3:18b).

### 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.

- ["The Fiery Furnace"](#)
- ["Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego"](#)
- ["Someone's in the Fiery Furnace"](#)

### 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)
- Fiery Furnace images: <http://www.christart.com/clipart/image/fiery-furnace>; <http://www.goodsalt.com>



## PERSONAL APPLICATION:

I must be willing to stand up for God even when it is not popular.

## 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. Even though King Nebuchadnezzar praised the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in Daniel 3:27-28, he continued to insist that everyone show him respect and honor. He did not give up his own pride.
3. In Daniel 4, we read that he had another disturbing dream, and Daniel was called to interpret it. Daniel was very disturbed by the dream and encouraged the king to change his life (Daniel 4:27). But 12 months later, Nebuchadnezzar walked on the roof of his palace and claimed all the success of his kingdom as his own. Immediately, he lost his mind and became like an animal, just as the dream had predicted.
4. While there is some dispute about the meaning of “seven times” (4:16,23,25,32), it is very possible that the most powerful king in the world at that time lived in the fields like an animal for seven years! What was the solution—the way for him to return to his life as king? He had to repent of his great pride.
5. Discuss the meaning of pride and the dangers of pride with the kids.

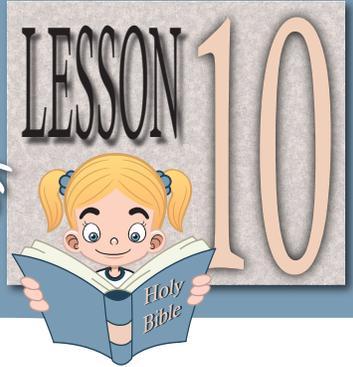
## PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—BEFORE CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):

- 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.



# Belshazzar's Feast



## Daniel 5



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 5; 8:1; 1 Samuel 2:3; Proverbs 11:2; 16:5; 18:12; Philippians 2:3

### MEMORY WORK:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: "Love does not brag" (1 Corinthians 13:4b, NASB).

OLDER CHILDREN: "A man's pride will bring him low, but the humble in spirit will retain honor" (Proverbs 29:23).

### 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.

- ["Humble Yourselves in the Sight of the Lord"](#)
- ["O How I Love Jesus!"](#)

### 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)
- "Humble and Haughty" from Sarah Richey's *Creative Bible Teaching: Volume 1* (pp. 14-15)



## PERSONAL APPLICATION:

I must remember that God gave me every blessing and talent that I have. God does not want me to be a “show off” or to brag about things I do or things I have.

## LESSON STARTS HERE

### INTRODUCTION: (YOUNGER CHILDREN)

Review last week’s lesson.

God helped Daniel understand dreams and visions. In today’s lesson, the king was having a party and something very strange happened. Let’s see what happened and how Daniel was able to help.

### INTRODUCTION: (OLDER CHILDREN)

Review last week’s lesson.

How do you feel when a friend brags about how good he is in a sport or what good grades he makes? Have you ever been guilty of bragging about yourself to your friends? The king in today’s story was a very proud man who did not acknowledge God or thank Him for what he had. This displeased God. Maybe we can learn something from this king so we won’t be guilty of acting that way.

### POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. Belshazzar, the king of the enormous Babylonian Empire, decided to have an elaborate feast in his palace for a thousand of his nobles (officials who were loyal to him) and his wives. There was a great deal of drinking alcohol at this wild party. [Commentators generally regard this feast as a “drunken orgy.”]

**HISTORICAL NOTE:** Nebuchadnezzar died in 562 B.C., having been king of the Babylonian Empire for 42 years. After his death, a series of kings followed, the last one being overthrown by Nabonidus, a descendant of Nebuchadnezzar. Nabonidus is usually considered the last true king of Babylon. He and his son Belshazzar reigned over the Empire together for several years. At the time of the banquet recorded in Daniel 5 (October, 539 B.C., according to secular history), Nabonidus was in Arabia.

Belshazzar is called “the son of Nebuchadnezzar” because he was a descendant of the former king—not because he was actually his son.

Daniel had been in captivity almost 70 years by the time of this banquet, which means that he was probably in his mid- to late 80’s at the time of Belshazzar’s feast.

The “Darius the Mede” mentioned in Daniel 5 and 6 is one of three kings of Media and Persia (Medo-Persian Empire), named Darius mentioned in the Bible. He was the son of the husband of Esther, Ahasuerus (Xerxes).



2. To show off to his guests, Belshazzar ordered that all the gold vessels that had been taken from the Temple in Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar many years before be brought to the party. They drank wine from the golden cups that had once been used in worship to God, and they praised their gods as they drank and drank.
3. Suddenly, in the midst of the loud partying, “the fingers of a man’s hand” appeared and began writing on a plaster wall in the room where these people were gathered. The back of the hand was toward Belshazzar, and he was scared to death (note verse six). Neither the king nor any of his guests had ever seen anything like that before. Everyone was terrified!
4. Belshazzar called his wise men to come and tell him what the appearance of the hand and the strange words on the wall meant. But none of the wise men or magicians could interpret the message. This made the king even more frightened (Daniel 5:9). The Queen Mother (ESV; probably a daughter of Nebuchadnezzar) came into the room to see what the commotion was all about. She reminded the king that there was a man in the kingdom who had helped Nebuchadnezzar understand dreams and other things that Babylonian wise men could not understand. She told Belshazzar that he should talk to this man whose name was Daniel.
5. Daniel was brought to the king to help. Belshazzar promised him a gold necklace, the clothing of royalty, and the position of being third in command of all the empire if he would interpret the writing on the wall. Daniel told the king that he did not need gifts; he would help the king without any reward at all.
6. Daniel reminded Belshazzar that Nebuchadnezzar had been very proud and haughty about his great empire, and God had punished him for his arrogance and for his faith in false gods. [Tell the older children about Nebuchadnezzar’s time living as an animal in the field (Daniel 4:28-37).] Belshazzar knew about this terrible time in Nebuchadnezzar’s life, yet refused to learn from it (Daniel 5:22).
7. Daniel said that the hand was sent from God and that the message was miraculously from God. It was not a magic trick or something that one of the idols of the Babylonians could do. The inscription (mysterious message) on the wall was “MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.” MENE meant that God was about to bring Belshazzar’s kingdom to an end. TEKEL meant that the king had been judged as unfaithful to the Ultimate Judge. UPHARSIN (or PERES) meant that the Babylonian empire would be taken over by the Medes and Persians.
8. Even though Belshazzar was very frightened by Daniel’s message, he kept his promise to Daniel and gave him a golden necklace, the clothing of royalty, and declared him to be the third in command in the empire.
9. That very night, the Medo-Persian army, led by Darius the Mede, conquered Babylon. [They were evidently attacking while Belshazzar was having the wild party.] The Persian army killed Belshazzar that same night.
10. God punished Belshazzar because of his great pride and his disrespect (Daniel 5:22-23). Belshazzar was self-centered and unwilling to give others or God credit for the good things that happened to him. This kind of pride means bragging about what we have done or about what we have. If I have sinful pride, I can make other people feel less important. We must remember that God made us and has given each of us the abilities and blessings that we have; we must never forget where they came from. [Illustrate this point by reminding the children how hard their parents work to provide them with food, clothing, etc., how selfish and disrespectful it is when children expect more and more but don’t show gratitude, etc. How do parents feel when they are treated this way? How do children feel when other kids treat them this way?]

**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](#).

**Ages 2-5:**

- “[Daniel Explains the Message Coloring Sheet](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- “Proud or Humble” game: Describe situations in which children (or adults) act proud and humble, or have pictures to illustrate prideful behavior. Have the children decide if the person in the scenario is proud or not. (“[Proud and Humble Scenarios](#)” provided in activity sheets)
- Bring two different kinds of candy or fruit. Compare how they are different and how they are the same. Talk about how it is easy for us to look at others and try to compare ourselves to someone else. Talk about how God does not want us to compare ourselves to others.
- Let the children act out the story. Let one of them wear a glove to represent the “hand.”
- Trace each child’s hand on a piece of construction paper or cardstock, or help them make handprints with tempera paint. Write “God warned an evil king with handwriting on a wall” (or something similar), along with the appropriate Scripture references from the book of Daniel.

**1st-2nd Graders:**

- Play Tic-Tac-Toe with clues from this lesson and previous lessons (“[Tic-Tac-Toe Instructions](#)” provided in activity sheets)
- “Proud or Humble” game: Describe situations in which children (or adults) act proud and humble, or have pictures to illustrate prideful behavior. Have the children decide if the person in the scenario is proud or not. (“[Proud and Humble Scenarios](#)” provided in activity sheets)

**3rd-4th Graders:**

- Play Tic-Tac-Toe with clues from this lesson and previous lessons (“[Tic-Tac-Toe Instructions](#)” provided in activity sheets)
- Have the kids (as a class or in teams) make words from acrostics of the words PRIDE or BELSHAZZAR or another key word in the story, such as PROUD. Examples: P is for pushy, R is for rude, O is for obnoxious, U is for ugly, D is for disrespectful, B is for bragging, etc. (“[Belshazzar Acrostic Activity](#)” and “[Pride Acrostic Activity](#)” provided in activity sheets)
- “Proud or Humble” game: Play as described above, adjusting scenarios to fit your age group. Draw a line on the board to divide it in half. Label one half “Proud” and the other “Humble.” Write the scenarios on index cards and put them into a bucket/basket. Let each child take a card, read it, and decide on which side of the board to place his card. Discuss with the class how the “proud” scenarios could be turned into “humble” scenarios.
- Have the children read the following:
  - Daniel 5 (and chapters 1-4 if they have not done so this quarter). [This could be assigned Sunday, to be completed by Wednesday.] Print out copies of the Daniel 1-5 quiz from AP’s [Advanced Bible Reader](#) site for the children to take.
  - *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.”)

- *The Mystery of the Moving Hand*, by Larry Burgdorf, Arch books (DISCLAIMER: p. 7—change “goodness sakes” to “they thought they were great”)
- *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)

## SONGS:

### “HUMBLE YOURSELVES IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD”

Author: Bob Hudson

(See Internet)

### “O HOW I LOVE JESUS” ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Frederick Whitfield

(Tune: See church song book)

#### VERSE 1:

There is a name I love to hear,  
I love to sing its worth.  
It sounds like music in mine ear,  
the sweetest name on Earth.

#### CHORUS:

O how I love Jesus, (3X)  
Because He first loved me.

#### VERSE 2:

It tells me of a Savior’s love,  
Who died to set me free;  
It tells me of His precious blood,  
The sinner’s perfect plea.

(CHORUS)

#### VERSE 3:

It tells of One whose loving heart,  
Can feel my deepest woe;  
Who in each sorrow bears a part,  
That none can bear below.

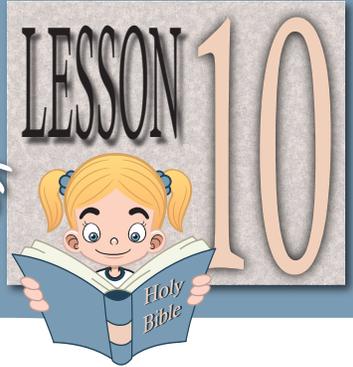
(CHORUS)

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





# Belshazzar's Feast



## Daniel 5



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 5; 8:1; 1 Samuel 2:3; Proverbs 11:2; 16:5; 18:12; Philippians 2:3

### MEMORY WORK:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: "Love does not brag" (1 Corinthians 13:4b NASB).

OLDER CHILDREN: "A man's pride will bring him low, but the humble in spirit will retain honor" (Proverbs 29:23).

### 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.

- ["Humble Yourselves in the Sight of the Lord"](#)
- ["O How I Love Jesus!"](#)

### 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
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- 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)
- "Humble and Haughty" from Sarah Richey's *Creative Bible Teaching: Volume 1* (pp. 14-15)



## PERSONAL APPLICATION:

I must remember that God gave me every blessing and talent that I have. God does not want me to be a “show off” or to brag about things I do or things I have.

## 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. With OLDER CHILDREN, divide the class into groups, and give each group a concordance (preferably concordances designed for kids). Ask the children to look up “pride,” “haughty,” “boastful,” “humble,” etc. in their concordances, and then look up the verses listed in the Bible. Discuss with the class what the Bible says about being haughty or boastful compared to being humble.
3. With YOUNGER CHILDREN, write words and/or names from this lesson and previous lessons on cards. Hide the word cards in different places around the room. Tell them you are thinking about a man who interpreted the writing on the wall, for example, and ask them to find the card with the man’s name. If they can’t think of it right away, give them a hint, such as, “His name begins with a ‘D’.”

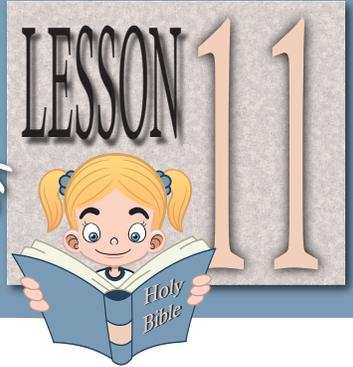
## PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—**BEFORE** CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):

- See Sunday morning’s lesson.

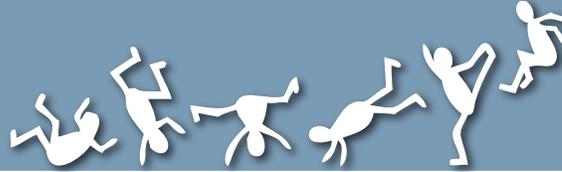
\*\*\* IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS PERTAINING TO THIS LESSON, PLEASE CLICK THE “SUGGESTION” BUTTON BESIDE THE BUTTON FOR THIS LESSON ON THE CURRICULUM WEB SITE.



# Daniel in the Lions' Den



## Daniel 6



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 6

### MEMORY WORK:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: Daniel was not harmed “because he believed in his God” (Daniel 6:23b).

OLDER CHILDREN: “So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no injury whatever was found on him, because he believed in his God” (Daniel 6:23b).

### 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.

- [“Brave Daniel”](#)
- [“Daniel Prayed to God”](#)
- [“Daniel”](#)
- [“Daniel Always Prayed”](#)

### 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)



## PERSONAL APPLICATION:

I will try to be like Jesus all the time—not just when it seems “cool” or safe. Then I can be a good influence (example) for the people around me.

## LESSON STARTS HERE

### INTRODUCTION: (YOUNGER CHILDREN)

Last week we talked about a king named Belshazzar who had a big party. What strange thing happened during the party?

Have you ever been scared by some kind of animal? Today we’ll see how Daniel faced some scary animals and how God took care of him.

### INTRODUCTION: (OLDER CHILDREN)

Review last week’s lesson.

In the last few lessons, we have learned many good things about the prophet Daniel. (Ask the children what they have learned about Daniel.) He loved God and others knew that he loved God, too. Something very frightening happens to Daniel in our lesson today! Let’s see how he handled this frightening situation.

### POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. In previous lessons, we saw that the Babylonian Empire had conquered Judah and taken its people off into captivity. King Nebuchadnezzar and other kings after him ruled the Babylonian Empire, including Belshazzar. As Daniel prophesied, Belshazzar was killed and the Medes and Persians took over Babylon.
2. When Darius the Mede conquered the Babylonian Empire (October 12, 539 B.C.), he set up a system of officials (satraps) to help him rule over the lands he had conquered. One of those government officials was the prophet Daniel. King Darius wanted to prevent corruption in his government and make sure all tax revenues made it to his treasury.



**NOTE:** Daniel would have been in his mid- to late-80’s at this time. See the Historical Notes from Lessons 8-10 for more historical background for this lesson.

3. Daniel was very good at his job “because an excellent spirit was with him” (Daniel 6:3; cf. 5:12,14; 9:23). He was honest and trustworthy, and he loved God very much. Other officials in the government who were jealous of Daniel wanted to get rid of him, but they couldn’t find any fault with him or with the way he did his job. They decided that the only thing they could really accuse him of was being more loyal to God than to the king. Daniel’s devotion to God was so evident in his life, so much a part of him every day, that others could not see anything wrong of which to accuse him! [Remember the Jews’ desperate accusations of Jesus?]

4. These jealous officials met “by agreement” (6:6, ESV) and went to the king twice, appealing to his own pride and ego, and persuaded him to sign a new law. The new law prohibited anyone in the entire empire from pleading for anything from a god or man except the king himself, for 30 days.
5. The men who convinced the king to sign this ridiculous law watched Daniel “by agreement” (Daniel 6:11, ESV), apparently knowing about Daniel’s practice of praying three times a day. Daniel knew about the law the king had signed, but he also knew that he could not (and would not) worship the king instead of God. So Daniel continued to pray in his upstairs room, with the windows wide open toward Jerusalem. He did not go into hiding nor was he afraid of others seeing him pray at his window.
6. He could have waited until the 30 days were over before praying at the window, and he could have simply prayed in his mind during the 30 days. He knew, however, that no law made by man should take priority over worshipping and serving God. Daniel had a “custom” of praying three times each day towards Jerusalem (Daniel 6:10), a custom that he probably had since he had been in Babylon, and he did not want to break that custom. The New Testament tells Christians to have a practice/custom of prayer as well, and to never stop from keeping that custom (1 Thessalonians 5:17).
7. The men who were so eager to get rid of Daniel “assembled and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God” (6:11). Their trap had sprung. They went to tell the king what they had seen—and to remind him of the law he had signed without thought for the consequences (how it would really affect people). The king was heartbroken, “greatly displeased with himself” (6:14), because he cared very much about Daniel. He tried to find ways to rescue Daniel from the law’s punishment, but he was reminded that any law he signed could not be changed. He allowed himself to be pushed into a further mistake: he ordered Daniel thrown to the lions. He told Daniel, “Your God whom you serve continually, He will deliver you” (Daniel 6:16).
8. A huge stone was rolled over the opening of the pit where the hungry lions were kept. The king and his nobles sealed the stone with their signet rings. [Explain this to the kids with a shaped stamp or ring pushed into hot wax or Play-Doh®. In the New Testament, Pilate’s seal was used on the stone that covered the tomb of Jesus so that it should not be opened, and so that it would be known if it had been opened.]
9. King Darius could not sleep or eat that night, and he didn’t want to be entertained. He was worried about Daniel. As soon as the Sun began to rise the next morning, he hurried to the pit and ordered the massive stone removed. King Darius called out to Daniel, calling him a “servant of the living God” (6:20). He questioned whether God really did save Daniel, as the king had asked the day before.
10. Daniel’s response: I was protected from harm because (1) I was innocent before God Himself, and (2) I was innocent in regard to the king. “I was found blameless” before God, he said, and had done the king “no harm” (6:22, ESV). Thrilled that his friend and trusted advisor had not been hurt by the lions, the king ordered Daniel to be lifted out of the pit and the men who had plotted against Daniel be thrown to the lions instead.



**NOTE:** Daniel 6:24: “those men who had maliciously accused Daniel...” is literally “those men who had devoured the bones and flesh of Daniel...”

11. Knowing none of the idols that his people and he worshipped were as powerful as the God of Daniel, Darius sent a decree, in many languages, to people throughout his kingdom to tell them that they should “tremble and fear before the God of Daniel” (Daniel 6:26).

12. Daniel’s courage proved to be a valuable lesson to everyone in the whole Persian Empire. He would remain a powerful force for good during the reign of the next king, Cyrus.
13. Daniel was a wonderful influence on everyone around him. To be a good influence means that you show people, by the ways you talk and act, that trying to live as God has told us through His Word is the most important thing in the world to you. [With older children, you can illustrate this idea with soft clay and anything that will make a carved impression. Just as we can make an impression in clay, we make an impression for good or bad on the lives of people every day.]

**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 in the Lions’ Den Coloring Sheet](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- Let the children act out the story. Provide lion masks or paperbag puppets for the children to pretend they are the lions. (“[Lion Mask Cutout](#)” provided in activity sheets)
- Make a lion face using a paper plate: use yellow or gold yarn for the mane, black yarn for the whiskers, and round buttons for the eyes. Draw the nose and mouth on the plates.
- Instead of playing “Duck, Duck, Goose,” try “Daniel, Daniel, Lion”!
- Sit in a circle and talk about how important it is to pray. Take prayer requests, and then pray together as a class.

**1st-2nd Graders:**

- “[Daniel in the Lions’ Den Word Search](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- Play Bible Baseball: before class, write review questions over lessons from Daniel on index cards. Divide the questions into “single,” “double,” “triple,” and “home run” piles, trying to put the more difficult questions in the triple and home run piles. Assign spaces in the room for first, second, and third bases, as well as home plate. Divide the class into two teams. As each student takes a turn to “bat,” let them choose the level of question they want. If they answer correctly, they take that base; if they answer incorrectly, they are out. After three outs, it’s the other team’s turn to “bat.”

**3rd-4th Graders:**

- “[Daniel in the Lions’ Den Word Search](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- Play Bible Baseball: before class, write review questions over lessons from Daniel on index cards. Divide the questions into “single,” “double,” “triple,” and “home run” piles, trying to put the more difficult questions in the triple and home run piles. Assign spaces in the room for first, second, and third bases, as well as home plate. Divide the class into two teams. As each student takes a turn to “bat,” let them choose the level of question they want. If they answer correctly, they take that base; if they answer incorrectly, they are out. After three outs, it’s the other team’s turn to “bat.”
- Have the children read the following:
  - Daniel 6
  - *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.”)

- *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)
- *Kids Favorite Bible Stories: Featuring Daniel in the Lion’s Den*, by Stephen Elkins, Wonder Kids (DISCLAIMER: p. 13—Daniel would have been an old man by this point)
- *Daniel and the Lions*, by Lois Rock, My Very First Bible Stories, Lion Children’s (DISCLAIMERS: p. 5 —remove “of Babylon”; p. 14—remove “and listening”)
- *Daniel and the Lions*, by Larry Burgdorf, Arch Books (DISCLAIMER: p. 13—unlike cherubim, the angels of the Bible did not have wings. Color in the wings to make them look like a rock.)
- *Daniel and the Lions*, by Kelly Pulley, Zonderkidz I Can Read! Series, The Beginner’s Bible (DISCLAIMER: p. 27—unlike cherubim, the angels of the Bible did not have wings)
- *Daniel and the Roaring Lions*, by Louise Ulmer, Arch Books (DISCLAIMERS: p. 3—Daniel would have been an old man at this point. Color his hair gray/add wrinkles; p. 10—change the second line to “The lions were ready to be fed.”; p. 12—unlike cherubim, the angels of the Bible did not have wings; skip note to parents)
- *Daniel and the Hungry Lions*, by Mary Hassinger, The Beginner’s Bible (DISCLAIMERS: skip pp. 8-9, which start with “King Darius thought...”; p. 21—unlike cherubim, the angels of the Bible did not have wings)
- *Daniel in the Lions’ Den*, by Fran Thatcher, My Bible Story Library, Thomas Nelson (DISCLAIMER: p. 10—change “He asked” to “He probably asked”; skip pp. 20-21, starting with “Darius was overjoyed”)

## FINGERPLAYS:

### “BRAVE DANIEL”

Brave Daniel in the lions’ den.

He didn’t think of fear. (shake head negatively)

He bowed his head and prayed to God, (fold hands and bow head as if in prayer)

With all the lions near. (spread arms to show lions all around)

Next morning, when the Sun came up, (point up)

The king called, “Are you there?” (cup hand to mouth, lower head)

“Oh, yes!” brave Daniel called to him, (cup hand and raise head)

“God kept me safe in His care!”

## SONGS:

### **“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.

### **“DANIEL”** ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Lora Laycook

(Tune: “Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross”)

Daniel was a man of prayer, daily prayed he three times,  
Even when they cast him down in the den of lions.

Even then, in the den, fear could not alarm him.  
God just shut the lions’ mouths so they could not harm him.

### **“DANIEL ALWAYS PRAYED”** ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Unknown\*

(Tune: “I’m a Little Teapot”)

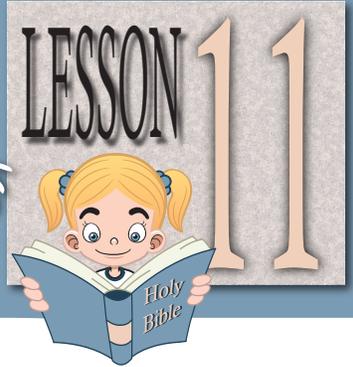
Daniel always prayed three times a day.  
Only God, he would obey.  
He was thrown into the lions’ den.  
Look! He’s safely out again!

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

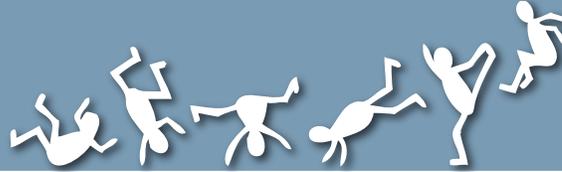
\*\*\* IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS PERTAINING TO THIS LESSON, PLEASE CLICK THE “SUGGESTION” BUTTON BESIDE THE BUTTON FOR THIS LESSON ON THE CURRICULUM WEB SITE.



# Daniel in the Lions' Den



## Daniel 6



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 6

### MEMORY WORK:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: Daniel was not harmed “because he believed in his God” (Daniel 6:23b).

OLDER CHILDREN: “So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no injury whatever was found on him, because he believed in his God” (Daniel 6:23b).

### 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.

- [“Brave Daniel”](#)
- [“Daniel Prayed to God”](#)
- [“Daniel”](#)
- [“Daniel Always Prayed”](#)

### 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)



## PERSONAL APPLICATION:

I will try to be like Jesus all the time—not just when it seems “cool” or safe. Then I can be a good influence (example) for the people around me.

## INTRODUCTION:

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

## POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

Review Sunday’s lesson. (See [O.T. 8 Review Questions](#) for example questions.)

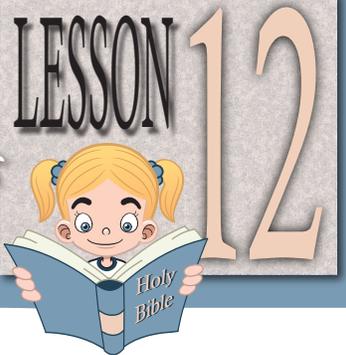
## PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—**BEFORE** CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):

- 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.



# Esther Saves Her People



## Book of Esther



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:

Book of Esther

### MEMORY WORK:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: "Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go" (Genesis 28:15a).

OLDER CHILDREN: "Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go" (Joshua 1:9b).

### 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.

- ["Esther"](#)
- ["Queen Esther"](#)

### 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
- "[Maps of Babylonian and Persian Empires in Daniel's Time](#)" (provided in map section of curriculum Web site)
- Esther A Beka Flash-A-Card Series (DISCLAIMER: use the cards, not the lesson book)



## PERSONAL APPLICATION:

When I am afraid or sad, I can be sure that God is always with me, so I can choose to be brave.

## LESSON STARTS HERE

### INTRODUCTION: (YOUNGER CHILDREN)

Review last week's lesson. Daniel and his friends had to be brave, even when it was very hard. Today we're going to learn about someone else who had to trust God and do something that was very brave.

### INTRODUCTION: (OLDER CHILDREN)

Review last several week's lessons, focusing on how Daniel and his friends had to be brave. In our lesson today, we will learn how a brave young woman became a queen and was asked to trust in God and be brave!

**HISTORICAL NOTE:** The book of Esther took place during the years 483-473 B.C. (The events described took place between chapters 6 and 7 of the book of Ezra.) Ahasuerus [(Hebrew name) or Xerxes (Greek name)] ruled from 485-465 B.C. Esther became queen in 479 B.C. Ahasuerus was the son of Darius I and the grandson of Cyrus the Great.

According to ancient historical records, the first banquet mentioned in the book of Esther was held to impress all the nobles and officials of the kingdom so that they would back the king's planned invasion of Greece. Ahasuerus' father, Darius I, had been defeated by the Greeks in 490 and had planned to return for revenge; before he could return, he died. Ahasuerus had also suffered two other embarrassing defeats at the hands of the Greeks. He planned to finish what his father started, hoping to appeal to the "national pride" of those whose support he needed for a successful invasion. During the time of the search for a new queen, Ahasuerus was attempting another invasion of Greece—but again, was defeated.

The Bible doesn't tell us what happened to Vashti. Many historians think that Vashti was also called Amestris, and was the mother of Artaxerxes, king of the Persian Empire from 463-425 B.C. Artaxerxes was born in 483, the year of the first banquet mentioned in chapter one. It is possible that Vashti was pregnant at that time and therefore unwilling to put herself on public display before the crowd of drunken men (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, On-line, "Xerxes I"; *Barnes' Notes*, Esther 1:1-9; *BibleArchaeology.org*, "Thermopylae and the Book of Esther").

Historians believe that Vashti was a very powerful influence on her son during his reign. This likely indicates that Esther was either dead or had fallen "out of favor" after Ahasuerus died.

The names of both Mordecai and Esther are closely related to names of idols of Babylon (Marduk and Ishtar, respectively). The Jews had become so assimilated into the Babylonian, and then the Medo-Persian, cultures that it was not difficult for them to hide their religious identity if they wanted to. [continued]





**HISTORICAL NOTE [cont.]:** Xerxes was also the famous king whose enormous army attacked a small group of Greeks in the battle of Thermopylae. The movies “300” and “The 300 Spartans” portray the battle.

### POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. The people of the Southern Kingdom of Judah (the Jews/Hebrews/Israelites) had lived in a land far from their homeland for about 70 years, under foreign kings. Their homeland had been devastated, and Jerusalem and the Temple had been destroyed. They were ruled by a Persian king named Ahasuerus (or Xerxes) for part of this time. Kings of ancient nations were known to have extravagant banquets, and Ahasuerus was no exception, holding a great banquet for 180 days! [This is the first of eight banquets described in the book of Esther.]
2. When this banquet was over, Ahasuerus decided to have another one that lasted seven days. At the same time, Queen Vashti was having a banquet for the women in her palace. The king decided to entertain his guests by showing off his beautiful wife. He and his guests had a great deal of wine to drink and were no doubt very rowdy. As one of the most powerful kings in the world, he thought he could do anything he wanted and make anyone obey him. But Vashti refused to come to the banquet and parade herself before a crowd of drunken men. Ahasuerus was very angry; the queen refusing to obey him made him look foolish. He decided that Vashti would no longer be queen and ordered his servants to begin a search for a new queen to replace her. The king sent orders throughout his huge kingdom that the most beautiful young women were to come to his palace. [It probably took three or four years for the king’s orders to be carried, i.e., there are three or four years between chapters 1 and 2.]
3. A Jew named Mordecai, a gatekeeper at the city gates, heard about the king’s desire for a new queen. His uncle and aunt had died years before, and Mordecai had taken their young daughter Esther to raise as his own daughter. [Esther is the Persian word meaning “star;” her Hebrew name, Hadassah, means “myrtle.”] He took Esther (his cousin) to the palace to see if she could become the new queen. He warned her not to tell anyone that she was a Jew.
4. Esther (and the other girls) was prepared for 12 months, with oils and perfumes, to be brought before the king. When Esther was taken, Mordecai saw very little of her. But he walked in front of the building where the women were kept every day and waited for word on how she was doing. When Ahasuerus looked at the young women who were brought to the palace, he chose Esther to be his new queen.
5. In the capital city of Susa (or Shushan), there was a government official named Haman. He was a very wealthy man, and he was in charge of a lot of the king’s business. The king ordered that people bow down to Haman wherever he went. But Mordecai refused to bow down to Haman, and this made Haman very angry! When he found out that Mordecai was a Jew, Haman decided to try to get rid, not only of Mordecai, but also all of the Jews in the entire kingdom!
6. Haman went to the king and told him that a certain group of people, the Jews, were willfully disobeying the laws of the kingdom and should be punished. He asked the king to sign a letter to be sent throughout the kingdom that on a certain day twelve months later, all the Jews would be killed. The king agreed and sent messengers throughout the kingdom to deliver these special orders. The entire capital city was in an uproar because so many Jews lived there. Many Jews had been born and raised in Susa and didn’t know anything about Palestine (Canaan) where the Jews had come from.

7. When Mordecai heard about the king's order and the planned massacre of his people, he became very sad and upset. He tore his clothes as people did back then when they were extremely distressed and sad; he wept and wailed throughout the city and sat in sackcloth and ashes—another thing people did when they were that upset. Esther did not know why Mordecai was acting this way and sent servants to find out what was wrong with him. He sent a message back to the queen telling her what would happen to her people—and to her. He urged Esther to plead with the king to change the law.
8. Esther responded to Mordecai, reminding him that if anyone who had not been called by the king tried to go before him, he would be killed if the king did not choose to hold out his golden scepter to him to allow him to come to him. Esther told him that the king had not called for her in a month.
9. Mordecai sent word back to Esther warning her that all of the Jews, including her, would be killed if she did not go to the king. Mordecai knew that the Jews would be saved one way or the other, but he also believed in God's providence. He told her, "[W]ho knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (3:14). [With the older children, read together Esther 4:13-14 and Esther's reply in verse 16.]



**RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS:** See the article "[God's Providence and the Problem of Evil](#)" by Kyle Butt on the Apologetics Press Web site for a study of biblical providence.

10. Esther spent three days fasting, and asked Mordecai to encourage the rest of the Jews in Shushan to do the same. They were, no doubt, praying to God as well.
11. Esther went to the king and waited outside the throne room. The king **did** hold out his scepter to Esther, and he offered to give her anything she wanted, up to half of his kingdom. She explained that she would like to invite Haman and him to a banquet she'd prepared that very day. This, no doubt, made Haman feel very important and more prideful.
12. At the banquet the king asked Esther what troubled her and again offered to give her anything that she wanted up to half of the kingdom. She asked only for Haman and him to come to another banquet the next day. This made Haman feel even more proud, that he would be invited, not just to one private banquet with the king and queen, but **two!** [Remind older children about the pride of Belshazzar and what happened to him!]
13. As Haman walked by the king's gate again, Mordecai still didn't "stand or tremble" before Haman. So Haman's anger continued to grow against Mordecai and, with the advice of his family, he built a gallows to be used specifically to kill Mordecai. He would suggest to the king the next day that Mordecai be killed on it.
14. That very night, the king could not sleep and asked for some old records to be read to him. Providentially, of all the nights he couldn't sleep, and of all the records that could have been brought to the king, the king read the record that told of how Mordecai had uncovered a plot to kill him and found that nothing had been done to honor Mordecai.
15. The next day, Haman came to suggest to the king to kill Mordecai, but instead, the king asked Haman what he thought should be done for someone who the king wanted to honor. Haman, full of pride, assumed the king was talking about himself. Instead, the king wanted Haman to bestow the same honors that he had suggested on Mordecai. The king ordered Haman to lead Mordecai through the streets on the king's horse, wearing royal robes and a crown. Haman's plan had backfired, and now he was terribly angry and embarrassed!

16. At the second banquet, the king again asked Esther what she wished from him. This time she asked the king to save her life and the lives of her people, thus telling him for the first time that she was a Jew. The king was so very angry that someone would plan to harm his beautiful queen. When she told him Haman was the evil man who wanted to have the Jews destroyed, the king ordered that Haman be killed on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai.
17. Because the first order (to kill the Jews) was sealed with the king's signet ring and therefore could not be "undone," the king gave permission to Esther and Mordecai to write another order to be sent throughout the kingdom, signed by the king. [The second order was sent about two months after the first.] The new order gave the Jews the right to defend themselves if anyone attacked them. The Jews had a great celebration that became known as the Feast of Purim. Mordecai told the Jews to give gifts to the poor as part of their celebration. The Jews today still celebrate this feast for two days (in February or March) each year, at which time the book of Esther is read, special food is eaten, and gifts are exchanged.
18. Sometimes going to the doctor, staying with a new babysitter, spending the night at a camp or a friend's house for the first time, or starting a new school year, etc., can frighten us. Whenever we need to be brave, we can remember brave Queen Esther. She listened to the advice of Mordecai. She knew that he would not ask her to do something she could not do. And remember that Esther prayed for three days before going to the king. Even a queen knew that she could depend on God to help her to be brave.



**RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS:** See the article "[Questions and Answers: Why is the Book of Esther in the Bible?](#)" by Kyle Butt on the Apologetics Press Web site for a response to the argument that Esther does not belong in the Bible since it does not even mention God.

**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](#).

**Ages 2-5:**

- "[Esther Saves Her People Coloring Sheet](#)" (provided in activity sheets)
- Jewelry: Help the children make necklaces with cereal or macaroni that has been spray-painted gold and strung on yarn. Give each child a paper crown which they can decorate with stickers. Help them make scepters of paper towel rolls painted gold. ("[Crown Cutouts](#)" provided in activity sheets)
- Placemats: On 9x12 sheets of construction paper write "I can be brave like Queen Esther." Make crown stamps out of sponges or potatoes, and let the children decorate their placemats with these stamps. If possible, laminate the placemats.
- Banquet: Bring fruits, cheese, bread, etc. to class. Jews today share triangle-shaped cookies called Hamantaschen Cookies (recipe below). They are three-cornered because the Jews have a tradition that Haman wore a three-cornered hat. Make and bring the cookies to class, and let the children add icing and sprinkles to their cookies.
- Ask a young woman from your congregation to dress up as Esther and tell the story in her own words.

### 1st–2nd Graders:

- Banquet: Bring fruits, cheese, bread, etc. to class. Jews today share triangle-shaped cookies called Hamantaschen Cookies (recipe below). They are three-cornered because the Jews have a tradition that Haman wore a three-cornered hat. Make and bring the cookies to class, and let the children add icing and sprinkles to their cookies.
- Ask a young woman from your congregation to dress up as Esther and tell the story in her own words. **Or** let the children role play the story.
- Write review questions over this lesson on the backs of paper crowns. Tape them onto the floor, and let the kids throw a beanbag onto a crown, then answer the question on the back. The game can be played for individual or team points. (“[Crown Cutouts](#)” and “[O.T. 8 Review Questions](#)” provided in activity sheets)
- Play Bible Bowling: Divide the class into two teams. Use either plastic bowling pins (with a review question taped on the back of each pin) or toilet paper tubes (with review questions inside). Let each child have a turn knocking down a pin or tube (lined up in a straight line) with a soft ball. If he answers correctly the question on/in the pin, his team gets a point. (“[The Book of Esther Clues](#)” provided in activity sheets)

### 3rd–4th Graders:

- Banquet: Bring fruits, cheese, bread, etc. to class. Jews today share triangle-shaped cookies called Hamantaschen Cookies (recipe below). They are three-cornered because the Jews have a tradition that Haman wore a three-cornered hat. Make and bring the cookies to class, and let the children add icing and sprinkles to their cookies.
- Ask a young woman from your congregation to dress up as Esther and tell the story in her own words. **Or** let the children role play the story.
- Write review questions over this lesson on the backs of paper crowns. Tape them onto the floor, and let the kids throw a beanbag onto a crown, then answer the question on the back. The game can be played for individual or team points. (“[Crown Cutouts](#)” and “[O.T. 8 Review Questions](#)” provided in activity sheets)
- Play Bible Bowling: Divide the class into two teams. Use either plastic bowling pins (with a review question taped on the back of each pin) or toilet paper tubes (with review questions inside). Let each child have a turn knocking down a pin or tube (lined up in a straight line) with a soft ball. If he answers correctly the question on/in the pin, his team gets a point. (“[The Book of Esther Clues](#)” provided in activity sheets)
- Have the children read the following:
  - Esther [This could be assigned Sunday, to be completed by Wednesday.] Print out copies of the Esther quiz from AP’s [Advanced Bible Reader](#) site for the children to take.
  - *Discovery* magazine article: “Esther: Queen of Courage,” [December, 2001](#)
  - *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.”)
  - *It’s Scary, God!* by Benrei Huang, Standard Publishing
  - *Bible Heroes: Esther*, by Jason Parish, Watertown Press (DISCLAIMER: remove “and praying” on p. 7)
  - *Queen Esther Helps God’s People*, by Kelly Pulley, Zonderkidz I Can Read! Series (DISCLAIMER: skip p. 11)

- *Just in Time Esther*, by Carol Wedeven, Arch books
- *Adventure Bible: Brave Queen Esther*, by David Miles, Zonderkidz I Can Read! Series

### Hamantaschen Cookies Recipe

1 cup oil	1 ½ cup sugar
4 eggs	2 tablespoons vanilla
2 tablespoons baking powder	5 ½ cups flour
6 ounces preserves (any flavor)	

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease and lightly flour cookie sheets.

Combine the oil, sugar, eggs, vanilla, and baking powder in a large bowl. Mix well. Add flour a little at a time. Blend well.

Roll out the dough ¼ inch thick on a floured surface. Cut two-inch circles with a cookie cutter or cup. Spoon ½ to 1 teaspoon of preserves in the center of each circle. Bring three edges of each circle to the center to form a triangle. Pinch edges together.

Bake for 25 to 30 minutes or until golden brown. Cool before serving.

### SONGS:

#### “ESTHER”

Author: Jewel Kendrick

(Tune: “I’m a Little Teapot”)

[See *Sing-A-Story* Vol. 1, Old Testament, by Jewel Kendrick]

#### “QUEEN ESTHER” ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Unknown\*

(Tune: “Good Morning Song”)

(Teacher:) Queen Esther,

(Children:) Queen Esther,

(Teacher:) She heard bad news.

(Children:) Oh, no!

(All:) She talked to the king, and she saved all the Jews!

\*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.





# Esther Saves Her People

## LESSON 12

### Book of Esther



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:

Book of Esther

### MEMORY WORK:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: "Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go" (Genesis 28:15a).

OLDER CHILDREN: "Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go" (Joshua 1:9b).

### 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.

- ["Esther"](#)
- ["Queen Esther"](#)

### 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
- "[Maps of Babylonian and Persian Empires in Daniel's Time](#)" (provided in map section of curriculum Web site)
- Esther A Beka Flash-A-Card Series (DISCLAIMER: use the cards, not the lesson book)



## PERSONAL APPLICATION:

When I am afraid or sad, I can be sure that God is always with me, so I can choose to be brave.

## INTRODUCTION:

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

## POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

Review Sunday’s lesson. (See [O.T. 8 Review Questions](#) for example questions.)

Write the names of the main characters of the book of Esther on the board. Write clues about the main characters on index cards (example clues below). Let each child choose a card and put it on the board (with tape or a magnet) under the name of the correct character. (“[The Book of Esther Clues](#)” provided in activity sheets)

## 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.

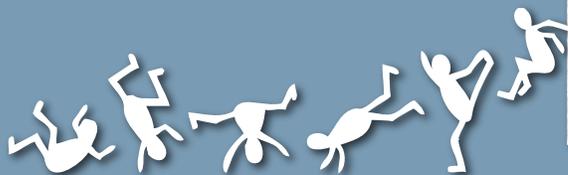
\*\*\* IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS PERTAINING TO THIS LESSON, PLEASE CLICK THE “SUGGESTION” BUTTON BESIDE THE BUTTON FOR THIS LESSON ON THE CURRICULUM WEB SITE.



# Ezra Teaches God's Law

## LESSON 13

### The Book of Ezra



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:

Ezra; 2 Chronicles 36:22-23; Nehemiah 8:1-8

### MEMORY WORK:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: "I will not forget Your Word" (Psalm 119:16b).

OLDER CHILDREN: "Give me understanding, and I shall keep Your law; indeed, I shall observe it with my whole heart" (Psalm 119:34).

### 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.

- ["Three Good Men"](#)
- ["Read Your Bible; Pray Everyday"](#)
- ["The B-I-B-L-E"](#)
- ["Wise Kids"](#)

### 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.]
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- Pictures/drawings from any books listed under 3rd-4th Grader Pre-Class Activities/ Learning Centers
- Betty Lukens' felt pieces
- ["Maps of Babylonian and Persian Empires in Daniel's Time"](#) (provided in map section of curriculum Web site)
- Ezra and Nehemiah A Beka Flash-A-Card Series (DISCLAIMER: use the cards, not the lesson book)



## PERSONAL APPLICATION:

**YOUNGER CHILDREN:** I need to read God’s Word every day and obey it (put into practice what I read).

**OLDER CHILDREN:** It is important for me to support (pray for, give money to) missionaries, preachers, and brotherhood organizations who tell others about Jesus. But I must never forget that God expects **me** to be responsible for my own study, and He expects **me** to live like His Word tells me to. No one can read and understand the Bible **for** me. No one can obey God’s Word **for** me. I must make that decision for myself while I’m young so that as I get older I will know how God wants me to handle problems that come my way.

## LESSON STARTS HERE

### INTRODUCTION: (YOUNGER CHILDREN)

What brave queen did we talk about last week? What did she do that was so brave?

Bring a suitcase to set out as a visual. Ask the children if they have ever been on a long trip. Talk about the things you might take on a trip. (You may even want to “pack” or “unpack” a few things in your suitcase as you talk.) Talk about how sometimes it feels like you will never get to your destination. Many of God’s people left Babylon and went on a very long trip back to Jerusalem. Even though they were very excited to go back to Jerusalem, they still made bad choices and did not always obey God.

### INTRODUCTION: (OLDER CHILDREN)

Review previous lessons in this quarter, focusing on the main characters’ knowledge of and obedience to God’s Word.

What do you think would have happened if Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, or Abednego had not studied God’s Law and/or had not obeyed it? How would what the Bible says about them be different? Does God expect us to study His Word and obey it? Today we are going to talk about another man who was determined to do right and to help God’s people to do right.

**HISTORICAL NOTE:** The book of Ezra continues the story of the Jews, following the story recorded in 1 and 2 Kings and 1 and 2 Chronicles. It contains almost all that is known of Jewish history between 538 B.C. (when Cyrus of Persia conquered Babylon) and 457 B.C. (when Ezra arrived in Jerusalem). The book briefly describes the return of many Jews from Babylon to Palestine as well as the rebuilding of the Temple. The inspired author of the book had four main purposes: (1) to remind the Jews that God had fulfilled His promises to restore the land He had given them hundreds of years earlier; (2) to remind the Jews of their covenant with God to be holy people, completely separate from the idol-worshipping nations around them; (3) to help provide God’s people with godly leadership; and (4) to teach them God’s Law and the importance of protecting and obeying it. (cont.)





**HISTORICAL NOTE (cont.):** The book of Ezra covers about 78 years, but it does not give a continuous description of events. There are at least two large gaps in the sequence of events, and at least one passage (Ezra 4:7-23) is not in chronological order. “There is an interval of [over] 50 years between the last events in the previous historical writings and the events of Ezra. Both Kings and Chronicles close with the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and the deportation of many of its inhabitants into Babylonia. There, they were settled in colonies, and were not mistreated as long as they were quiet subjects. Many of them prospered so well that when, later, they had an opportunity to return to their homeland, they chose not to do so. Since the Temple was destroyed, they could not carry on their sacrificial system; but they continued such religious ordinances as the Sabbath and circumcision, and gave great attention to the study of the Law” [*The Living Bible Encyclopedia*, Vol. 5, page 690].

The Persian kings of this time period were Cyrus (538 B.C.), Darius (521-486 B.C.), and Artaxerxes I (464-424 B.C.).

### POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. Nebuchadnezzar had captured Jerusalem and taken control of all of Judah. He had destroyed the Temple and sent large groups of Jews from Palestine to Babylon. The Jews were held captive in Babylon for 70 years, as Jeremiah had said they would be (because of their great disobedience to God). During that time, the powerful king of Persia, Cyrus, had taken over the Babylonian empire. He decided to let the Jews return to Palestine (Judah) if they wanted to go. Many Jews had become very comfortable in Babylonia and did not want to face the hardships of rebuilding Jerusalem and the rest of their homeland. Many of the original captives had died, and their children (born in captivity) did not know anything about Palestine. 42,360 were in the first group who decided to return to Jerusalem under the leadership of Zerubbabel, who had been appointed governor of Palestine (Nehemiah 7:66-73).



**RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS:** See the article “[Cyrus the Great: King of Persia](#)” by Wayne Jackson on the Apologetics Press Web site for a discussion of Cyrus, archaeology, and the Bible.

2. The Jews who did return were faced with many problems, not the least of which was continual interference and harassment by idol worshipping people around them. The Jews started rebuilding the Temple with a great deal of enthusiasm and did finish the work on the Temple—though it was not nearly as grand as before it was destroyed. But over time they listened to their enemies (mainly the Samaritans) more than paying attention to God and His promises, and they stopped rebuilding the rest of Jerusalem. They gradually became more and more like the pagans around them. They married idol worshippers and stopped worshipping God. [See Malachi 1:6-14; 2:11; 3:5. During that time, the prophets Haggai (during the rebuilding of the Temple) and Zechariah did their best to help the people focus on what they needed to do, without much success.]
3. Years passed, and the Jews in Palestine were becoming more and more like the people who were supposed to be their enemies. Finally, another Persian king, Artaxerxes I, gave Ezra, a priest and scribe, permission to return to Jerusalem. Ezra wanted to go and teach the Jews God’s Law again, because he had heard about the way his people were living. Ezra had been taught the Law very well, and he was very sad that the Jews were ignoring what God had told them to do.

4. King Artaxerxes wanted to help Ezra, so he sent gold and silver, salt, grain, oil, wine, and garments for the priests who agreed to go. The king said that anyone who refused to listen to Ezra’s teaching would be severely punished. Ezra took about 1,500 Jewish men with him, not counting 250 priests. The king offered to send Persian soldiers to protect Ezra and the others on their long and dangerous journey, but Ezra refused the king’s offer. Ezra wanted the men with him, and the Persians, too, to understand that **God** would protect them. To prepare for their journey, they camped near a river for three days, praying and fasting.
5. When they finally reached Jerusalem (after about four months of travel), Ezra could see for himself the terrible condition of Jerusalem—and the even worse spiritual condition of the Jews. The Jews had not been teaching the Law to their children (Nehemiah 13:24), and they had not finished rebuilding Jerusalem. When he found out how many Jewish men had married idol-worshipping women, he became so upset that he tore his clothes and pulled at his hair. He was so upset that the Jews had not kept God’s Law that he spent all day praying and weeping; a number of the Jews gathered around him. At the evening sacrifice, Ezra prayed for the Jews and begged for God to forgive them. [Most of Ezra 9 is his anguished prayer to God.]
6. Many of the Jewish men realized what they had done and promised to “put away their foreign women and children” (i.e., not live with them any longer). Ezra went into a room of the Temple and continued “mourning over the unfaithfulness of the exiles” (Ezra 10:6b).



**NOTE:** For three months, Ezra held a “divorce court” so that the Jewish men could “put away” their idol-worshipping wives. If the children ask about this, explain that the Israelites had been forbidden by God to marry the pagans of Canaan (Deuteronomy 7:3-5). Besides the fact that they would be influenced individually to forsake God, He was concerned that the physical nation of Israel would cease to be a set apart group of people—the holy descendants of Abraham, through whom He had promised to bless the world (through Jesus). Now that Jesus has come, the latter reason is no longer in effect. It is still unwise for Christians to marry non-Christians because of the danger of being spiritually corrupted (1 Corinthians 15:33), but it has not been deemed by God as a reason worthy of divorce under the New Covenant.

Make sure the children understand that the “foreign women” were not acceptable to God because they worshipped idols—not because of their skin color or “race.”

7. An announcement was made to all the Jews that they were to come to Jerusalem three days later. [Several thousand poor and/or older Jews had been left in the area when Jerusalem was destroyed. The people summoned by Ezra would no doubt have been the survivors of that group and their children, etc.] All the Jewish men came to Jerusalem and stood in the open square at the front of the Temple, in heavy rain, to hear what God wanted them to do.
8. Ezra worked with the Jews for several years, teaching them about God’s Word. At one time, the people stood outside from early in the morning until the middle of the day, listening as Ezra read the Law to them. He read God’s Word to them and taught them what it meant (Nehemiah 8:1-8). Because of Ezra’s efforts, and the efforts of others who helped him, most of the Jews listened and decided to repent and obey God’s Law again.
9. Ezra was a like a missionary, going to a faraway place to teach people about God’s Word. But the people he went to were his own people—Jews who should have known God’s Word but had chosen to ignore it. We can and must help missionaries go to other places to teach God’s

Word, but we must remember that it is our individual responsibility to study the Bible, practice what we learn from it every day, and teach people that live in our own cities, on our own blocks, and in our own schools. We cannot be pleasing to God if we think only “other people” need to learn about Him and His Word, that only “other people” need to obey Him, and that only “other people” need to go teach the lost.



**RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS:** See the article “[There is Still Hope for Israel](#)” by Dave Miller on the Apologetics Press Web site for a discussion of Ezra and its relevance today.

## 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:

- “[Ezra Prays Coloring Sheet](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- Provide each child with a picture of Ezra to color. Help each student to glue it on a piece of poster board (9” x 12” for example). Ahead of time, punch out the shape of a large “E” on the side where the picture is to be glued. Give each child a shoestring or piece of yarn to “sew” the “E”.
- Write the word “BIBLE” in one or two different languages. Help the children write (or trace) “BIBLE” in English underneath them. Have Bibles in different languages to show the children. (“[Bible Word Activity](#)” provided in activity sheets)
- Soap Bible Craft: Cut black felt to cover the front, back, and one side (the long side—the “spine”) of a small bar of soap; provide one bar and one piece of felt per child. Help the children glue the felt to the soap. Provide gold or yellow sticky letters that spell “Bible” for the children to stick to the fronts of their soap Bibles—or type the word “Bible” on small pieces of paper which they can glue to the fronts of their “Bibles.”
- Take a long walk around the church building, discussing the long journey the Jews had to make as they returned to Jerusalem. Have a place to stop, share a snack (very basic, such as grapes or raisins, unleavened bread, cheese, water), and read a few verses, such as Deuteronomy 12:28; 13:4; 15:4b-5; 7:6; Ezra 8:3,22b.
- Discuss with the children the importance of reading the Bible **every** day. Make a chart for each child to take home to keep track of how often they read their Bibles. On the top of the chart, print/copy “I will read my Bible every day!” Send a letter home with the charts asking parents to let their child read (or the parents read to them) from the Bible each day and put a sticker on their chart each time they read. (“[Bible Reading Calendar](#)” provided in activity sheets)

### 1st-2nd Graders:

- Provide paper for the children to write notes to the missionaries your congregation supports and/or to your preachers thanking them for their hard work. Let the kids decorate their cards as time allows.
- Talk with the children about what they would take with them if they moved to a faraway place. Talk about meeting new friends, going to a new school and a new congregation. Talk with them about God’s people in the Old Testament, the Jews, being taken from their homes and forced to live in a faraway land as slaves—then many years later being given the chance to go back to their

homeland.

- Spray shaving cream on paper plates, one for each child. Show them key words from the lesson that you have written on sentence strips or construction paper. Ask the children to copy/write each word in their shaving cream. (They can smooth the shaving cream over after each word and start over. Example words: Ezra, Bible, Law, obey, etc.)
- [“Bible Numbers Activity”](#) (provided in activity sheets)
- Play Tic-Tac-Toe with review questions from this and previous lessons ([“Tic-Tac-Toe Instructions,”](#) board, and [O.T. 8 Review Questions](#) provided in activity sheets)
- Discuss with the children the importance of reading the Bible **every** day. Make a chart for each child to take home to keep track of how often they read their Bibles. On the top of the chart, print/copy “I will read my Bible every day!” Send a letter home with the charts asking parents to let their child read (or the parents read to them) from the Bible each day and put a sticker on their chart each time they read. ([“Bible Reading Calendar”](#) provided in activity sheets)

### 3rd-4th Graders:

- Provide paper for the children to write notes to the missionaries your congregation supports and/or to your preachers thanking them for their hard work. Let the kids decorate their cards as time allows.
- Have the children make large magnets or doorknob hangers of the memory verse (or a reminder to read their Bibles every day).
- [“Bible Numbers Activity”](#) (provided in activity sheets)
- Play Tic-Tac-Toe with review questions from this and previous lessons ([“Tic-Tac-Toe Instructions,”](#) board, and [O.T. 8 Review Questions](#) provided in activity sheets)
- Discuss with the children the importance of reading the Bible EVERY day. Encourage/ challenge them to read every day, possibly reading the book of Ezra by next Sunday. ([“Bible Reading Calendar”](#) provided in activity sheets)
- Have the children read the following:
  - Ezra. [This could be assigned Sunday, to be completed by Wednesday.] Print out copies of the Ezra quiz from AP’s [Advanced Bible Reader](#) site for the children to take.
  - *Discovery* magazine article: “Making Sense of God’s Word,” [October, 2005](#) (see also the cover of that issue)
  - *Zerubbabel Rebuilds the Temple*, by Larry Burgdorf, Arch books (DISCLAIMER: skip the note to parents)

## SONGS:

### “THREE GOOD MEN” ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Unknown\*

(Tune: “Three Blind Mice”)

Three good men, three good men,  
Came back home, came back home.  
The Temple was repaired by Zerubbabel,  
The Law was repeated by Ezra, and  
Then Nehemiah rebuilt the walls.  
They’re three good men.

**“READ YOUR BIBLE, PRAY EVERYDAY” ([Click to Hear](#))**

Author: Unknown\*

(Tune: See Internet)

If you read your Bible and pray everyday, you’ll grow, grow, grow. (REPEAT)

Grow, grow, grow, grow,

Grow, grow, grow.

If you read your Bible and pray everyday, you’ll grow, grow, grow.

(Make hand movements as if reading, praying, and like a child growing.)

If you neglect your Bible and forget to pray, you’ll shrink, shrink, shrink.

(Make hand movements as if closing Bible, head gesture saying “No,” and like a child shrinking.)

(REPEAT)

Shrink, shrink, shrink, shrink,

Shrink, shrink, shrink.

If you neglect your Bible and forget to pray, you’ll shrink, shrink, shrink.

(Make hand movements as if closing Bible, head gesture saying “No,” and like a child shrinking.)

So read your Bible and pray everyday, and you’ll grow, grow, grow.

(Make hand movements as if reading, praying, and like a child growing.) (REPEAT)

Grow, grow, grow, grow,

Grow, grow, grow.

So read your Bible and pray everyday, and you’ll grow, grow, grow.

(Make hand movements as if reading, praying, and like a child growing.)

**“THE B-I-B-L-E” ([Click to Hear](#))**

Author: Traditional

The B-I-B-L-E, yes that’s the book for me!

I stand alone on the Word of God,

The B-I-B-L-E.

The B-I-B-L-E, yes that’s the book for me!

I read and study and then obey,

The B-I-B-L-E.

**“WISE KIDS” ([Click to Hear](#))**

Author: Unknown\*

(Tune: “The Wise Man Built His House Upon the Rock”)

Wise kids read their Bibles every day.

(open hands like book)

Wise kids read their Bibles every day.

Wise kids read their Bibles every day,

And we trust upon the Lord! (point to heaven)

Wise kids learn to pray every day.  
(fold hands in prayer)  
Wise kids learn to pray every day.  
Wise kids learn to pray every day,  
And they wait upon the Lord! (point to heaven)

So read your Bible, pray, and you'll be wise. (open hands like book, then fold in prayer)  
So read your Bible, pray and you'll be wise.  
So read your Bible, pray and you'll be wise,  
No matter what your size!

\*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.



# Ezra Teaches God's Law

## LESSON 13

### The Book of Ezra



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:

Ezra; 2 Chronicles 36:22-23; Nehemiah 8:1-8

### MEMORY WORK:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: "I will not forget Your Word" (Psalm 119:16b).

OLDER CHILDREN: "Give me understanding, and I shall keep Your law; indeed, I shall observe it with my whole heart" (Psalm 119:34).

### 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.

- ["Three Good Men"](#)
- ["Read Your Bible; Pray Everyday"](#)
- ["The B-I-B-L-E"](#)
- ["Wise Kids"](#)

### LESSON VISUALS AND TEACHING AIDS (NOTE ANY DISCLAIMERS):

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- "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
- ["Maps of Babylonian and Persian Empires in Daniel's Time"](#) (provided in map section of curriculum Web site)
- Ezra and Nehemiah A Beka Flash-A-Card Series (DISCLAIMER: use the cards, not the lesson book)



## PERSONAL APPLICATION:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: I need to read God's Word every day and obey it (put into practice what I read).

OLDER CHILDREN: It is important for me to support (pray for, give money to) missionaries, preachers, and brotherhood organizations who tell others about Jesus. But I must never forget that God expects **me** to be responsible for my own study, and He expects **me** to live like His Word tells me to. No one can read and understand the Bible **for** me. No one can obey God's Word **for** me. I must make that decision for myself while I'm young so that as I get older I will know how God wants me to handle problems that come my way.

## INTRODUCTION:

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

## POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

Review Sunday's lesson. (See [O.T. 8 Review Questions](#) for example questions.)

Spend time reviewing the names of the books of the Bible and/or working on the memory verse. (Example game for reviewing books of the Bible: write various books of the Bible on index cards, mix up the cards, and put them in a bag or basket. Let the children take turns drawing cards, then saying the books that come before and after the book written on their cards.)

YOUNGER CHILDREN: Write key words from the story on index cards and hide them around the room. Give them clues about that person or thing and ask them to find the card with the word that best answers the clues. **Or** enlarge a page from the book of Ezra and have them point out those key words from the Bible. Praise them for being able to "read" the Bible. **Or** make sentences of three, four, or five words from the lesson; put one or two words on individual index cards; let the kids put the words together in a logical sentence. (Make several sentence puzzles like this; one per child would be great.)

OLDER CHILDREN: Play Bible baseball or help them learn a Bible verse in another language (or sign language).

"Bible Baseball": Before class, write questions about this and previous lessons on cards and divide cards into "single," "double," "triple," or "homerun," depending on how hard the questions are. Divide the class into two teams. Assign places for first, second, and third bases, and home plate in the classroom. When a team is "up to bat," a student selects a card and tries to answer the question. If he answers correctly, he takes that base. If he answers incorrectly, he is out. After three outs, it is the other team's turn.

## Example verses (in Spanish and French):

1 John 4:8b: God is love.

1 Juan 4:8b: Dios es amor.

1 Jean 4:8b: Dieu est amour.

Daniel 6:23b: Daniel...trusted in His God.

Daniel 6:23b: Daniel...habia confiado en su Dios.

Daniel 6:24b: Daniel...avait eu confiance en son Dieu.

Psalm 119:73: Your hands made me and formed me; make me learn and understand Your commandments.

Salmo 119:73: Tus manos me hicieron y me formaron; dame entendimiento para que aprenda tus mandamientos.

Psaumes 119:73: Tes mains m'ont façonné et affermi, accorde-moi l'intelligence pour que j'apprenne tes ordonnances.

**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.**

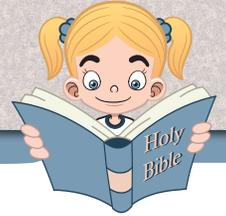




# Nehemiah

BONUS LESSON

## The Book of Nehemiah



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:

Nehemiah

#### MEMORY WORK:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: “[D]o what is right and good in the sight of the Lord” (Deuteronomy 6:18a).

OLDER CHILDREN: “Even a child is known by his deeds, by whether what he does is pure and right” (Proverbs 20:11).

#### 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.

- [“Bow Your Head”](#)
- [“Three Good Men”](#)
- [“God Is Listening”](#)

#### 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
- [“Maps of Babylonian and Persian Empires in Daniel’s Time”](#) (provided in map section of curriculum Web site)
- Ezra and Nehemiah A Beka Flash-A-Card Series (DISCLAIMER: use the cards, not the lesson book)
- Invite a man from the congregation to dress up as Nehemiah and describe his efforts/struggles to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

## PERSONAL APPLICATION:

I need to remember that one person can make a difference by choosing to do the right thing (what God says is right) every time. With God's help, I can do things I might have thought were too hard or impossible.

## LESSON STARTS HERE

### INTRODUCTION: (YOUNGER CHILDREN)

In our lesson last week, what happened when the Jews stopped reading and learning from God's Word? Who helped them by reminding them what God had to say?

Do you ever need help? What are some things you need help with? (Tying shoes, opening a container, fixing a toy that is broken, etc.) Today, we are going to learn how the Jews were trying to build a wall, but became very discouraged. Then one man came and told them they could do it together with God's help. Let's see what happened.

### INTRODUCTION: (OLDER CHILDREN)

Review last week's lesson, focusing on the importance of making sure we read/study God's Word every day.

Have you ever tried to do something by yourself and then realized you really needed someone else's help? (Let children give examples of this.) Sometimes isn't it easier to do something with help? In our lesson today, we will learn how Nehemiah, with God's help, tackled a **huge** project! Let's see what happens.

### POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. Working in the palace of Artaxerxes, King of Persia, was a Jewish man named Nehemiah. Nehemiah was a special servant—a cupbearer. His job was to taste everything that the king drank before it was served (to make sure of the wine's quality and to make sure the wine had not been poisoned). Nehemiah had been born and raised as one of the many thousands of Jews in the Persian Empire, but he had been taught about the land of Palestine (Judea) and about God's Laws. He knew very well about the Jews who had returned to rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple.



**NOTE:** See **Historical Notes** from the previous lesson on Ezra. Some scholars believe that the books of Ezra and Nehemiah were originally one book. The book of Nehemiah, which is written mostly in first person, contains several of his very personal prayers. Seventeen times the book mentions that Nehemiah and the people prayed to God.

2. Nehemiah's brother went to Jerusalem, and when he returned to Persia, Nehemiah was anxious to hear what the city and the Temple looked like. He was very sad and disappointed to hear that the city was still in ruins and that the gates and walls of the city still had not been repaired. Nehemiah was so upset that he cried, fasted, and prayed to God. He asked God to forgive the Jews for their failure to rebuild Jerusalem, and he asked God to help him find a way to go there to help.

3. Nehemiah had never been sad in the presence of the king before. But after hearing the bad news, he was sad in the presence of the king. The king noticed that Nehemiah was very sad (which apparently was dangerous—Nehemiah was “dreadfully afraid” that his sadness was noticed, 2:2) and asked him why. Nehemiah immediately prayed that God would help him say the right words to the king. Then he explained why he was so upset and asked for the king’s permission to go to Jerusalem to help rebuild the city. Nehemiah could have stayed in the comfort of the palace, but he wanted to give up his comfortable life to help his people, the Jews, in faraway Jerusalem.



**NOTE:** Comparing Nehemiah 1:1 and 2:1, it is evident that four months passed between the time Nehemiah learned of Jerusalem’s condition and the day that his sad face was noticed by the king. [Relevant Jewish month sequence: Chislev, Tebeth, Shebat, Adar, Nisan]

4. King Artaxerxes asked Nehemiah how long he would be gone, and Nehemiah told him how long he thought it would take. The king gave him permission to go **if** he would promise to return to the capital city (Shushan) when the work was completed. The king even gave Nehemiah important papers to prove that he was traveling under the king’s orders and protection. These papers would help Nehemiah get through dangerous territories and protect him from harm. The king also wrote a letter ordering that lumber and supplies be provided for Nehemiah to use in Jerusalem, **and** the king sent soldiers and horsemen with him to provide more protection.



**NOTE:** We are not told how long Nehemiah told the king he would be gone. It was likely a relatively small amount of time that had to be extended by permission from time to time, considering that he was governor of Judah for some 12 years (Nehemiah 5:14).

5. When Nehemiah finally arrived in Jerusalem, he and the soldiers with him rested for three days. Then one night he rode his horse around the city to get a good look at the city walls so he could decide exactly what needed to be done. The next day he called all the people together and told them that they could rebuild the walls of Jerusalem if they would work together and believe that God would help them. They agreed to begin work right away.
6. The idol-worshipping people around them did not want the Jews to finish rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. Sanballat, governor of Samaria, and some other men, came to make fun of and discourage the Jews as they worked. These men even threatened to stop the work by force. But the Jews paid no attention to them. The men worked in shifts so that the rebuilding could continue night and day. While half of the men worked on the walls, the other half served as guards. They all wore their swords while they worked, and one man had a trumpet to blow in case there were enemy attacks.
7. “The people had a mind to work” (Nehemiah 4:6). The people worked so hard together that they were able to completely finish rebuilding the walls in only 52 days (less than two months)! Their enemies were amazed that the work could have been completed so quickly. Nehemiah and the other Jews thanked God for His help in this great work and asked for His continued help against their enemies.



**NOTE:** Notice the number of times the phrase “next to him” is repeated throughout chapter three, indicating that they worked side-by-side, united in purpose for the first time in many years.

8. Sanballat and the other enemies of the Jews accused Nehemiah of trying to make himself king of Judah, and they tried to trick him into coming out of the city walls so that they could kill him. But Nehemiah responded by praying to God, and God protected him.
9. Nehemiah was governor of Jerusalem for 12 years before returning to the king. (Later, the king allowed him to return to Jerusalem to stay.) While he was gone, the Jews turned away from God again. One of the men who served in the Temple even married the daughter of Sanballat, the wicked governor of Samaria who had caused the Jews so much trouble. When Nehemiah returned, he made the man leave the Temple. He wanted the Jews to always remember what God had done for them and to obey His Word, so he made sure that they heard the Law read by Ezra.



**NOTE:** Ezra is not mentioned in the book of Nehemiah until the walls were finished; he probably was not in Jerusalem when Nehemiah arrived. Apparently Nehemiah sent for him to come to Jerusalem and help teach the people.

10. When the people heard the Law read, they again promised to obey God. They celebrated the Feast of Booths (also called the Feast of Tabernacles or the Feast of Ingathering), and they heard the Law read each day for seven days. There were many other times that Nehemiah (and Ezra) had to teach the people how to live according to God’s Law. They were important teachers and leaders for the Jews.
11. We probably will never have to work on a project as big as the rebuilding of a city, but we have many things happening in our lives every day that we can (and should) talk to God about. We have to make many decisions and choices, just as Nehemiah did. We need to remember that one person—with God’s help—can make a difference!

**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:**

- [“Nehemiah Coloring Sheet”](#) (provided in activity sheets)
- Let children “build the walls of Jerusalem” with large building blocks, or shoe boxes covered in brown butcher paper. Talk with them about the importance of cooperation, individual effort, and attitude as they work.
- Use paper plates to make a sad face and a happy face, one on the front of the plate and one on the back. Explain how Nehemiah was sad and happy. After the story, give examples from the story of when Nehemiah was sad and happy. As you read each example, ask the children to use the faces on their plates to show if Nehemiah was happy or sad during each situation.
- Let the children use graham crackers and icing to build a four-walled structure on a paper plate. (The kids will likely want to eat their “buildings”!)
- On a half sheet of card stock (or a styrofoam tray), print/write the words, “I will choose to do what is right.” Take each child’s picture with an instant camera, and tape or glue the pictures on the card stock. Let them decorate the card stock with stamps, stickers, markers, etc. Attach ribbon or yarn to the back of the card stock so the picture can be hung. ([“I Will Choose To](#)

[Do What Is Right' Activity](#)” provided in activity sheets)

### 1st-2nd Graders:

- Memory work exercise: Ask the children to sit in a circle. Repeat the memory verse several times with them. Say the first word of the verse and then pass a ball (or beanbag, or some other object) from child to child as each one adds a word of the verse. Continue around the circle until the entire verse is said two or three times. Continue this exercise with other memory verses from this unit.
- [“Nehemiah Questions and Word Search Activity”](#) (provided in activity sheets)
- “Bible Jeopardy”: Using information from all the lessons in this unit, write review questions (some more difficult than others). Assign point values to the questions, making the harder questions worth more. Put the questions into jars or bags by category and value. Divide the class into two teams. Members of each team take turns choosing a question and then trying to answer it. ([O.T. 8 Review Questions](#) provided on Web site)
- Memory Game: Write the names of characters from this unit (and something about each one) on index cards. Shuffle the cards and turn them face down, spreading them out. The children should try to match the cards by turning over two cards at a time—the person and what he/she did. If a match is found, the child keeps it. Play until all matches have been found. (You may want to make enough sets to divide the class into groups to make the game go faster.) ([“Memory Game Activity”](#) provided in activity sheets)

### 3rd-4th Graders:

- Memory work exercise: Ask the children to sit in a circle. Repeat the memory verse several times with them. Say the first word of the verse and then pass a ball (or beanbag, or some other object) from child to child as each one adds a word of the verse. Continue around the circle until the entire verse is said two or three times. Continue this exercise with other memory verses from this unit.
- [“Nehemiah Questions and Word Search Activity”](#) (provided in activity sheets)
- “Bible Jeopardy”: Using information from all the lessons in this unit, write review questions (some more difficult than others). Assign point values to the questions, making the harder questions worth more. Put the questions into jars or bags by category and value. Divide the class into two teams. Members of each team take turns choosing a question and then trying to answer it. ([O.T. 8 Review Questions](#) provided on Web site)
- Memory Game: Write the names of characters from this unit (and something about each one) on index cards. Shuffle the cards and turn them face down, spreading them out. The children should try to match the cards by turning over two cards at a time—the person and what he/she did. If a match is found, the child keeps it. Play until all matches have been found. (You may want to make enough sets to divide the class into groups to make the game go faster.) ([“Memory Game Activity”](#) provided in activity sheets)
- Have the children read the following:
  - Nehemiah. [This could be assigned Sunday, to be completed by Wednesday.] Print out copies of the Nehemiah quizzes from AP’s [Advanced Bible Reader](#) site for the children to take.
  - *Why Did Nehemiah Work So Hard?* by Pauline Youd, Wonder Books
  - *Nehemiah’s Greatest Day*, by Penny Frank, The Lion Story Bible
  - *Nehemiah: Builder for God*, by Neil M. Ross, A Bibletime Book, Christian Focus Publications (DISCLAIMER: p. 29—skip the first paragraph, which starts with “We, too...”)
  - *Nehemiah’s Greatest Day*, by Penny Frank, The Lion Story Bible, Lion Publishing (DISCLAIMER: p. 16—change “to even keep out a fox” to “to hold a fox”)

## SONGS:

### **“BOW YOUR HEAD”** ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Unknown\*

(Tune: “Taps”)

Bow your head, close your eyes,  
Send a prayer, send a prayer to the skies.  
God is list’ning above.  
God is love.

### **“THREE GOOD MEN”** ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Unknown\*

(Tune: “Three Blind Mice”)

Three good men, three good men,  
Came back home, came back home.  
The Temple was repaired by Zerubbabel,  
The Law was repeated by Ezra, and  
Then Nehemiah rebuilt the walls.  
They’re three good men.

### **“GOD IS LISTENING”** ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Lora Laycook

(Tune: “Frère Jacques”)

God is listening, God is listening, (put your hand to your ear)  
While we pray, while we pray, (put hands together as if to pray)  
Bow your head so lightly, (bow your head)  
Close your eyes so tightly, (close your eyes)  
Let us pray, let us pray.

\*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.



# Nehemiah

BONUS LESSON

## The Book of Nehemiah



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:

Nehemiah

#### MEMORY WORK:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: “[D]o what is right and good in the sight of the Lord” (Deuteronomy 6:18a).

OLDER CHILDREN: “Even a child is known by his deeds, by whether what he does is pure and right” (Proverbs 20:11).

#### 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.

- [“Bow Your Head”](#)
- [“Three Good Men”](#)
- [“God Is Listening”](#)

#### 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
- [“Maps of Babylonian and Persian Empires in Daniel's Time”](#) (provided in map section of curriculum Web site)
- Ezra and Nehemiah A Beka Flash-A-Card Series (DISCLAIMER: use the cards, not the lesson book)
- Invite a man from the congregation to dress up as Nehemiah and describe his efforts/struggles to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.



## PERSONAL APPLICATION:

I need to remember that one person can make a difference by choosing to do the right thing (what God says is right) every time. With God's help, I can do things I might have thought were too hard or impossible.

## INTRODUCTION:

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

## POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

Review Sunday's lesson. (See [O.T. 8 Review Questions](#) for example questions.)

Talk to the children more about the Feast of Booths (also called the Feast of Tabernacles or Feast of Ingathering). This feast was the last of the yearly festivals that were sacred to the Jews. It began five days after the Day of Atonement and lasted for eight days; it marked the end of the harvest. During this Feast, the Jews would live in booths and tents to remind themselves of the long journey of their ancestors through the wilderness, after leaving slavery in Egypt. It was also a time of thanksgiving to God for their harvest. [To harvest the grapes from local vineyards, entire villages would move into the vineyard and live in tents or shelters because the harvest had to be done quickly. They had to work together to have a successful harvest, just as Nehemiah and the other Jews had to work together to successfully complete the walls of Jerusalem.]

**YOUNGER CHILDREN:** Provide the children with large craft sticks, cutout "leaves," and clay. Give each child a styrofoam tray (or sturdy paper plate) and help them make a three-sided foundation for their "booths" using the clay. Then help them put craft sticks side by side in the clay, standing upright, to form three walls for the structure; put on the roof of leaves. If you have small pumpkins or other foods that remind the kids of fall, they can also be added around the shelter. This feast was important to the Jews because it reminded them of how God gave them their crops, food, etc. It was a time to be thankful, similar to our Thanksgiving Day in the U.S.

**OLDER CHILDREN:** Play "Bible Basketball" with review questions from each of the lessons in this unit. Write review questions on index cards and separate into "2 point" and "3 point" piles. Divide the class into two teams. As it's his turn, a student selects the point value of his question, and tries to answer it. If he answers correctly, his team receives that many points. If he answers incorrectly, the other team gets a chance to answer and receive the points if answered correctly. (This is even more fun if you can bring an indoor basketball goal to class.)

## 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.

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