

Daniel's Captivity

Teacher's Notes

Daniel was taken to Babylon as a captive. Nebuchadnezzar, the king, chose Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah to train to serve him. He re-named them Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. Daniel and his friends refused the king's food which the Lord said Jewish people should not eat and were eventually allowed to eat vegetables and drink water. They became healthier, and ten times smarter than the king's wise men.

Daniel 1 Lesson Plan		Materials Needed
1. Welcome Activity (2-3 minutes)	Captive Freeze pp. 5-6	music
2. Focus on the Word (5-7 minutes)	Read Daniel 1 and discuss p. 6	shortened version of text included on p. 7
3. Learn by Doing Choose 1-2 activities (15-20 minutes)	Daniel Is Our Conscience Necklace pp. 8-9	stiff paper, crayons or markers, scissors, hole punch, yarn or ribbon <i>optional:</i> pasta with large holes
	Vegetables and Water for Daniel pp. 10-11	paper plates; crayons or markers; scissors; glue, tape or stapler
	Picture to Color p. 12	crayons or markers
4. Recitation & Closing (2-3 minutes)	Recitation and Closing p. 13	Parent Note p. 14

New Church Concept Daniel

The meaning of "name" is the essential nature of a person. Dan comes from the verb "to judge" and holds within it the good of life and the holiness of faith; also in the highest sense the Lord's righteousness and mercy. It is the first thing that has to be affirmed and acknowledged before a person can be re-generated. See *Arcana Coelestia* 3923

The Hebrew suffix -el means "God". Daniel means "God is my judge".

Welcome Activity: Captive Freeze

In 605 BC, when Daniel was a youth, the kingdom of Judah was conquered and its people were taken captive and moved to Babylon. Daniel remained a captive but eventually rose to become second in command of Babylon. Introduce Daniel's captivity by playing a freeze game.

Turn some music on. While the music plays encourage the children to dance, move around, or move in their seats. Once everyone is moving, stop the music. When the music stops everyone must freeze where they are. Nobody can move again until the music starts. Check to be sure nobody is moving before starting up the music again. Do this several times, and then discuss.

continued on next page

Captive Freeze continued

1. What was it like to stand still and not move?
2. Imagine what it would be like to be captured and not be able to move about. How would you feel if you were captured?
3. How did it feel to move about again?
4. Today we are going to learn about Daniel. Daniel loved the Lord. When he was a young man, Daniel's country lost a battle and Daniel and his friends were captured. Let's find out what happened.

Focus on the Word

Read: Daniel 1. A shortened version is included on page 7. For young children you may wish to summarize some of the story and read aloud the sentences in **bold**.

1. **In this story, the children of Israel were captured and taken far away to the country of Babylon. Let's all say "Babylon."**
2. **The people in Babylon spoke a different language, ate different foods, and probably wore different clothes. Have you been to a different country? What was different there?**
3. **Babylon had a powerful king, King Nebuchadnezzar. Let's all say "Nebuchadnezzar." King Nebuchadnezzar acted selfishly. He wanted everyone to do just what he wanted. Have you ever met someone like that? Is it easy to be a friend to someone like that?**
4. **King Nebuchadnezzar asked his servant to choose the best captives he had taken to serve in his palace. They must look good, be wise, and be able to learn the language and customs of Babylon. Who did the king's servant chose?** He chose Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. He gave them new Babylonian names: Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.
5. **What did Daniel and his friends not want to do?** Eat the food and drink from the king. **What did they want to eat and drink?** Vegetables and water.
6. **Why was the king's steward worried?** He was afraid the men might not look good. But after ten days they looked better than others, so the king's steward let them eat vegetables and drink water.
7. **The Lord gives us another kind of food in His Word—food for our minds and spirits. We can think of this food when we say, "Give us this day our daily bread" in the Lord's Prayer. The Lord wants us to have food that is good for our bodies, but more importantly He wants our minds and spirits to be fed ideas that are good and true from His Word.**
8. **Daniel was a hero because he did what was right. He is like our conscience. Conscience is the Lord with us. Does your conscience warn you about doing what you know is wrong? Our conscience grows stronger when we learn true ideas from the Word. It helps us make good choices, to do what the Lord knows will make us truly happy. Like Daniel and his friends, when we learn and obey true ideas from the Lord's Word we can become wise, just as they did!**

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¹ In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it.² And the Lord delivered Jehoiakim into his hand, along with some of the articles from the temple of God. These he carried off to the temple of his god in Babylonia and put in the treasure house of his god.

³ Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, chief of his court officials, to bring into the king's service some of the Israelites from the royal family and the nobility—⁴ young men without any physical defect, handsome, showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well informed, quick to understand, and qualified to serve in the king's palace. He was to teach them the language and literature of the Babylonians.⁵ The king assigned them a daily amount of food and wine from the king's table. They were to be trained for three years, and after that they were to enter the king's service.

⁶ Among those who were chosen were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah.⁷ The chief official gave them new names: to Daniel, the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego.

⁸ But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked for permission not to defile himself this way.⁹ Now God had caused the official to show favor and compassion to Daniel,¹⁰ but the official told Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king, who has assigned your food and drink. Why should he see you looking worse than the other young men your age?"

¹¹ Daniel then said to the guard,¹² "Please test your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink.¹³ Then compare our appearance with that of the young men who eat the royal food, and treat your servants in accordance with what you see."¹⁴ So he agreed and tested them for ten days.

¹⁵ At the end of the ten days they looked healthier than any of the young men who ate the royal food.¹⁶ So the guard took away their choice food and the wine they were to drink and gave them vegetables instead.

¹⁷ To these four young men God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds.

¹⁸ At the end of the time set by the king to bring them into his service, the chief official presented them to Nebuchadnezzar.¹⁹ The king talked with them, and he found none equal to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; so they entered the king's service.²⁰ In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom.

(Daniel 1:1-20 adapted from the NIV)

Daniel Is Our Conscience Necklace

Materials Needed

Daniel Necklace Medallions p. 9 printed on stiff paper, crayons or markers, scissors, hole puncher, lengths of yarn or ribbon to make necklaces
optional: pasta with a large holes such as rigatoni

Prepare in Advance

Print the *Daniel Necklace Medallions* p. 9 on stiff paper. Cut out the medallions and punch 2 holes in each one (see picture). Cut yarn or ribbon into necklace lengths. Make a sample necklace to wear during class as a demonstration.



Our conscience is formed by true ideas we learn from the Word. Like conscience, Daniel speaks the truth. To go to heaven, we must heed our conscience. It is the Lord with us. King Nebuchadnezzar captured Daniel and gave him a new name. Children sometimes accuse a parent who is reprimanding their bad behavior of being a “Bad” Mom or Dad. At times we also “rename” true ideas, making them agree with what we want to do.

Children will make a necklace that features Daniel to wear as a way of remembering that conscience is the Lord speaking to us. It is our guide to knowing if what our words and deeds are true, kind and useful.

1. I am wearing a necklace that shows a picture of Daniel. Daniel was captured by king Nebuchadnezzar and chosen to work for him. Daniel loved the Lord. He knew true ideas from the Lord’s Word and wanted to do what was right. He is like our conscience. Let’s all say “conscience”. Our conscience is the voice inside us from the Lord that tells us the right thing to do.
2. Let’s talk about how our conscience works. How do you feel if a parent says it’s bed time when you’re having a good time? Everyone feels angry at times. What might your conscience tell you to do? (To do what your parent says.) Is this hard? (Yes, listening to our conscience can be hard sometimes.)
3. Our conscience is the Lord speaking to us. We must listen when it speaks, and not shut it out or make it captive to what we want to do that is not right.
4. We’re going to make a Daniel necklace to wear to help us remember our conscience. Give each child a Daniel Medallion to color.
5. The three words around Daniel are “True, Kind and Useful.” Our conscience asks if what we are saying or doing is true, kind and useful. If it is, we know it is the right thing to do.
6. Give children a length of yarn or ribbon and help them thread the Daniel Medallions on it. *Optional*: Have children thread pasta on the necklace.
7. Tie a knot to complete the necklace so children can wear them to remember to listen to their conscience.

New Church Concept Conscience

With regenerate people there is a conscience concerning what is good and true. From conscience they do what is good and from conscience think what is true. The good they do is the good of charity, and the truth they think is the truth of faith. With one who is not regenerate there is no conscience. If there is any it derives from love involving self or the world, and is therefore a false conscience. See *Arcana Coelestia* 977

Daniel Necklace Medallions



Vegetables and Water for Daniel

Materials Needed for Each Child

paper plate; crayons or markers; scissors; glue, tape or stapler; copy of *Vegetables and Water* p. 11

Prepare Ahead of Time

Gather supplies. Print a copy of *Vegetables and Water* p. 11 for each child.

Daniel and his friends refused the king's food and wine and chose to eat vegetables and drink water. Natural foods correspond to spiritual "foods" or ideas. For the Lord to be the center of someone's life they must avoid "eating" or taking in ideas that have been twisted into selfish lies, e.g. "I am better than others."

Children will create a plate of healthy eating options like the ones Daniel and his friends chose that also shows the true ideas from the Lord's Word we need to nourish our minds.



New Church Concept Food

The fact that goods and truths are a person's real food may be clear to anyone, for the person who is deprived of them has no life within himself, and is a dead man. The food on which the soul of the person feeds who is dead in this sense consists of the delights arising from evils, and of the pleasures gained from falsities. These are the food of death.

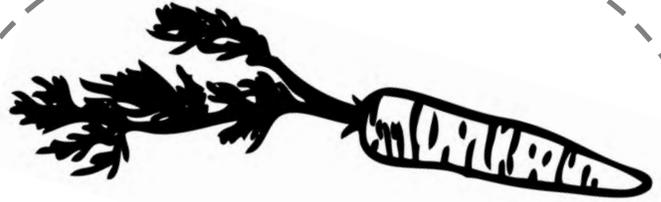
In the Word "food" means nothing other than spiritual and celestial food, which is faith in the Lord and love. *Arcana Coelestia* 680

1. What kinds of foods are important for us to grow healthy and strong?
2. Did you know that ideas are "food" for our minds? What kind of "food" is in the Lord's Word? (True ideas from the Lord.) When we read the Word, we learn how to treat others in healthy ways, and how to love the Lord, our Maker.
3. Daniel did not want the king's food because that food was like the selfish ideas we learn that make us treat other people and the Lord badly.
4. We are going to make a plate of nourishing foods like the one Daniel and his friends ate. Each food has a healthy idea from the Lord's Word written on it to help us remember that the Lord's Word "feeds" us.
5. Give each child a copy of *Vegetables and Water* (p. 11). While they color the pictures, read the healthy ideas from the Word aloud to them.
6. Help children cut around each vegetable and the glass of water.
7. Glue, tape or staple the picture onto a paper plate.

Vegetables and Water



Love the Lord



Obey the Commandments



Be Useful



Be Kind



Love Others



Love True Ideas



Recitation and Closing

Each lesson in the Daniel series includes a recitation. The recitations are taken from prayers in the book of Daniel. We will be learning one sentence each lesson, and building on each sentence until all six sentences can be recited together.

Introduce the 1st sentence of *Prayers in Daniel*, the recitation in this lesson, “Blessed be the name of God forever and ever.” Daniel loved the Lord and continued to bless His name and obey Him when he was taken to a foreign land.

We suggest saying the sentence aloud and inviting the children to repeat it after you.

If needed, break the sentence into phrases, e.g. “Blessed be”, “the name of God”, “forever and ever.” Invite children to repeat just one phrase at a time. End by joining the phrases together and saying the entire sentence.

Prayers in Daniel

- 1. Blessed be the name of God forever and ever.**
2. He reveals deep and secret things.
3. How great are His signs!
4. He gives wisdom to the wise.
5. He removes kings and raises up kings.
6. I thank You and praise You, O God.

Daniel 2:20-23; 4:3 adapted

Closing

Daniel was a hero. He is like our conscience. Our conscience gets stronger as we learn and use true ideas from the Word. It helps us make good choices and leads us to do what the Lord knows will make us truly happy. Like Daniel and his friends, when we learn and obey true ideas from the Lord’s Word we can become wise.

Give a *Parent Note* (p.14) to each child as he or she leaves.

Cut the Parent Notes apart and give one to each child.

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Dear Parents,

We are learning about Daniel, a hero who obeyed the Lord even when he was captured and taken to a foreign land. Daniel stands for our conscience, which reminds us to follow the Lord's commandments when we are captured by selfish thoughts. Today we learned that Daniel and his friends refused to eat the king's food. Ask your child what Daniel and his friends ate instead and what happened.

We are learning sentences from prayers in Daniel. Today we learned sentence 1. Please help your child say it at home this week.

Thank you.

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