

# Session 2

## Daniel: Principles and values

Children learn about the story of Daniel

**Scripture:** Daniel 1 and 2

**Supplies:**

- Sandbox with characters and wooden blocks (for the cities)
- 4 popsicle sticks with cards with the 4 friends' old and new names on them
- Carrots to eat afterwards
- Cards for the children to write their values on
- Copies of the vegetables and fruit drawing



### Welcome

Play a “vegetable game”: Carrot, potato and cauliflower. It works like “rock, paper, scissors”. The carrot stabs the cauliflower, the cauliflower folds over the potato, and the potato knocks the carrot over. The carrot is indicated by pointing the index finger, the cauliflower with an open hand, and the potato with a fist.



### Worship

**Settle down ritual:** Let the children close their eyes. Let them look at the dark and light patterns inside their eyelids. After 10 counts say in a quiet voice: “God’s light shines over all of us, whether it’s dark or light in our lives. Ask God to show you the dark things in your life and to help you get rid of them.” Wait a few more seconds and then close with “Amen.”



### Word

*Demonstrate Daniel 1 in the sandbox:*

About 600 years before Jesus was born, the people of Babylon were at war with the people of Jerusalem. The Babylonians were a lot stronger and took the Jews back to their city as slaves.

Their king’s name was Nebuchadnezzar. The king asked his men to find a few young men from Israel and train them to work for him. They had to be young, without any injuries or disabilities, smart and attractive.

Among those who were chosen, there were 4 men named Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. These were Hebrew names and the king immediately gave them new names. He gave the name Belteshazzar to Daniel, Shadrach to Hananiah, Meshach to Mishael, and Abednego to Azariah. They didn’t like their new names at all.

The young men had to eat a lot of good food, the same as the king ate. The four friends didn’t want to eat like the king and asked if they could only eat vegetables for ten days. The palace guard was scared that the king would kill him if he gave permission. Their group leader did, however, agree to let them eat differently and said that after ten days they had to look very healthy and strong, otherwise they would definitely be eating like the king again.

After ten days Daniel and his friends looked a lot better than the rest. Three years later they appeared before king Nebuchadnezzar. He tested them in different ways and realised that Daniel and his friends were smarter than all the wise men in Babylon. They were appointed to do important work in the palace.

One night the king had a bad dream. He was very upset. He called his magicians and fortune tellers to tell him what the dream meant.

The magicians and fortune tellers wanted to know what the king dreamt. But the king didn't trust them. He knew they would team up and invent any explanation. Then he said: "No, if you really are fortune tellers, first tell me *what* I dreamed and then tell me what it *means*."

The magicians and fortune tellers were very upset, because no person on earth could do that! Only God knows peoples' dreams.

The king now knew that they had been lying to him for many years and decided to have them all killed. Daniel and his friends were not with the others and the king, but they were also wise men and had to be killed.

When Daniel heard about this, he went to Arioch, the head of the palace guards. "Why does the king want to kill us?" Daniel asked him. Arioch explained the situation and Daniel asked for a little more time.

Why would Daniel need time? He wanted to pray and ask God to tell him the dream and explain it to him. Daniel and his three friends prayed together, and God showed Daniel what the king's dream was and told him what it meant. Daniel praised God!

Daniel went to the king and to the king's surprise, Daniel could tell him exactly what he had dreamt and what it meant. The king was very impressed with Daniel. He appointed Daniel as the governor of the whole province of Babylon and he gave him gifts. He also made Daniel head of his advisors (the smart people in Babylon). Daniel asked the king to let Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego help him reign over Babylon. The king agreed to it. Daniel then lived with the king in the palace.

God helped Daniel because he didn't worship the gods of Babylon. Daniel remained faithful and prayed in the direction of Jerusalem three times a day. This got him into trouble (more about this next time!)

Daniel stayed true to his values. There are two ways to stay on the right path. One is by following the rules and the other is by sticking to your values. Rules are what other people tell you to follow. Values are what you choose for yourself. Values are on the inside and rules are on the outside.

Principles are the ways you choose to live out those values. You choose your own habits and behavior to show what your principles are.

A rule can be something like not being able to eat a sweet treat without asking your mom. But it is very easy to sneakily eat some sweets when Mom isn't home.

Values mean that you won't eat too many sweets because it's unhealthy. If Mom isn't at home, you never take sweets. It isn't Mom who's stopping you, but your own values of wanting to stay healthy.

Daniel and his friends were far away from their parents and leaders. There was no one there to make sure that they did the right thing and lived according to God's laws. It was their own decision to stick to their values that they learned at home and in the temple.

Children reflect on the story:

1. I wonder which rules and values you have in your house
2. I wonder which example of Daniel you want to follow
3. I wonder what God would do if someone forgot their values and principles and did wrong things (remember forgiveness)



### Working and Playing

- Give each child a carrot to eat
- Give each child a card to write or draw three values on (help them with this)
- Let them colour only the vegetables in the colouring picture

### Prayer time:

Lord, help me stick to who I want to be and what I want to do, especially when I am alone. Amen.

**Closing prayer to end the session**

“God chooses you to help people who are struggling, no matter who you are. Go now, don’t be afraid. God is with you.”

**My three most important values**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

