

Palace Playground

LEADER MANUAL



Babylon
Daniel's Courage in Captivity



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LOVELAND, COLORADO
GROUP.COM/VBS

Group



2023 HOLY LAND ADVENTURE VBS

Babylon

Daniel's Courage in Captivity™

PALACE PLAYGROUND LEADER MANUAL

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Credits

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ISBN 978-1-4707-7086-0

Printed in the United States of America

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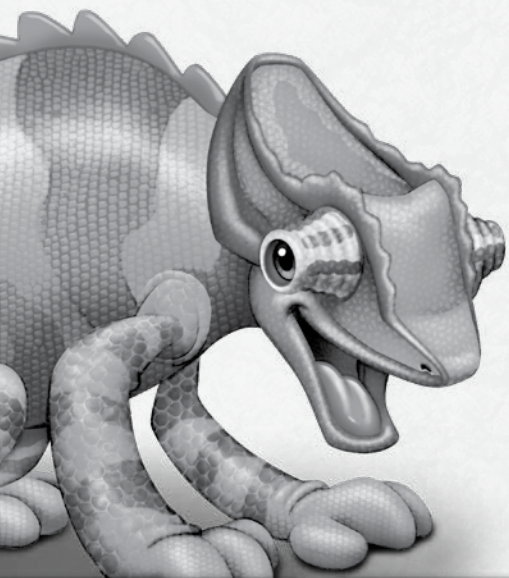


Babylon

Daniel's Courage in Captivity™

You'll reinforce Bible learning in a big way because the daily Bible Point is carefully integrated into each activity. That's why each center is so important to the overall learning experience.

Explore the entire program at a glance. Refer to the chart to see how each center's activities supplement other activities to make the Bible come to life at your church!



Bible Content

Celebration

Tribe Time

Daniel's Adventures

Palace Playground

Marketplace Shops



Day 1

Bible Point:

When things change, God is with you.

Key Verse:

"For God has said, 'I will never fail you. I will never abandon you.' "
(Hebrews 13:5)

Bible Story:

Enemies capture Daniel and his friends and take them to Babylon. (Daniel 1)

- Learn the Day 1 Bible verse and motions.
- Meet all the Tribes at Babylon.
- Sing "Through It All," "Watching Over You," and "Stand Firm."



Draw pictures on Color-Changing Paper, and discover that God is always with them.



Meet Daniel, and hear how he and his friends are faring as captives in Babylon.



Day 2

Bible Point:

When you need help, God is with you.

Key Verse:

"God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble."
(Psalm 46:1)

Bible Story:

Daniel interprets Nebuchadnezzar's dream. (Daniel 2)

- Hear a few God Sightings from the whole group.
- Learn the Day 2 Bible verse and motions.
- Sing "God Is for Me," "Only a Prayer Away," and "Where Do I Go?"



Explore a Dark-to-Dazzling Board, and discover that God is with them in life's darkest times.



Discover how Daniel is able to interpret the king's mysterious dream.



Race and stack sugar cubes, wooden blocks, and grocery sack "bricks"—buildings fit for a king!



Play Birthday Tag and other games that have to do with things on a calendar.

Choose a few shops to visit each day:



Royal Animal Courtyard



Astronomy School



Cylinder Seal Shop



Food Court





Day 3

Bible Point:

When you're afraid, God is with you.

Key Verse:

"Don't be afraid, for I am with you.
Don't be discouraged, for I am your
God." (Isaiah 41:10)

Bible Story:

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego
survive a fiery furnace. (Daniel 3)

- Talk about their daily mission in the Marketplace.
- Learn the Day 3 Bible verse and motions.
- Sing "Thankful," and "Come, Thou Almighty King."



Day 4

Bible Point:

When you're lonely, God is with you.

Key Verse:

"I am with you always, even to the
end of the age." (Matthew 28:20)

Bible Story:

Daniel prays, even though it means he
might get into trouble. (Daniel 6:1-16)

- Learn the Day 4 Bible verse and motions.
- Sing "Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)."
- Review Days 1-3.



Day 5

Bible Point:

When you're thankful, God is with you.

Key Verse:

"Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good!
His faithful love endures forever."
(1 Chronicles 16:34)

Bible Story:

God saves Daniel from the lions.
(Daniel 6:16-28)

- Learn the Day 5 Bible verse and motions.
- Hear Tribe cheers.
- Celebrate all the Bibles they're sending to kids around the world through Operation Kid-to-Kid.



Use Trembling Teeth
and a Yikes Poster
to share times
they're afraid.



Hold Sticky Sin Slime,
and realize that Jesus
took our sins upon
himself at the cross.



Celebrate all they
have to be thankful
for as they use
Praise Poppers.



Find out what
happens to Daniel's
friends when they
won't worship the
king's statue.



Watch as Daniel is
arrested because he
won't stop praying.



Discover what
happens when Daniel
is thrown to the lions.



Launch and catch
crazy stuff with big,
bigger, and biggest
catapults.



Sneak up on a
sleeping lion,
pretend to be
a long-necked
ostrich, and pull
like a strong team
of oxen.



Catch a shooting
star, hop along a
constellation, and
race around a
starry sky.



Hanging Gardens
Nursery



Jewelry
Bazaar



Metalworking
Shop



Mosaic Studio



Music Shop



Operation
Kid-to-Kid™






Day 1

DAILY SCHEDULE

BIBLE POINT: When things change, God is with you.

BIBLE STORY: Enemies capture Daniel and his friends and take them to Babylon. (Daniel 1)

 TIME	GROUP A	GROUP B	GROUP C	GROUP D
	Tribes <u>Issachar</u> <u>Naphtali</u> _____	Tribes <u>Gad</u> <u>Simeon</u> _____	Tribes <u>Joseph</u> <u>Zebulun</u> _____	Tribes <u>Levi</u> <u>Reuben</u> _____
	6:00–6:15	Celebration	Celebration	Celebration
Allow 5 minutes to travel to the next station.				
6:20-6:35	Tribe Time	Tribe Time	Tribe Time	Tribe Time
Allow 5 minutes to travel to the next station.				
6:40-6:55	Daniel's Adventures	Palace Playground	Visit Marketplace	
Allow 5 minutes to travel to the next station.				
7:00-7:15	Palace Playground	Daniel's Adventures		
Allow 5 minutes to travel to the next station.				
7:20-7:35	Visit Marketplace		Daniel's Adventures	Palace Playground
			Allow 5 minutes to travel to the next station.	
7:40-7:55			Palace Playground	Daniel's Adventures
Allow 5 minutes to travel to the next station.				
8:00-8:15	Tribe Time	Tribe Time	Tribe Time	Tribe Time
Allow 5 minutes to travel to the next station.				
8:20-8:30	Celebration	Celebration	Celebration	Celebration

TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:



Palace Playground Leader

As the Palace Playground Leader, you'll help kids and adults play games and discover more about life in ancient Babylon. During VBS, one-quarter of the Tribes at a time will join you for 15 minutes of high-energy activities. (A Tribe is a group of up to 10 people led by a Tribe Leader and an Assistant Tribe Leader.)

Follow these tips to make Palace Playground something kids and adults look forward to every day!

Organize for the VBS week. Work with the VBS Director to determine where Palace Playground will take place. Ideally, you'll want to meet in a large outdoor area free of rocks or other sharp objects. Work together to collect supplies.

Familiarize yourself with this manual. Read each day's Bible background, Scripture, and games. You'll be able to convey your enthusiasm and excitement if you're familiar with each activity and how it's done. Practice several times so you don't have to use this manual while you're working with Tribes.

Work with the Director to recruit several teenage Palace Playground Pals. These middle school or high school helpers will be invaluable to your Palace Playground success. Prior to each day, review the games so they'll know how to help you prepare, distribute, and collect the game supplies.

Learn (and use) names. While you won't have the opportunity to spend one-on-one time with participants as the Tribe Leaders do, kids and adults *will* be wearing name tags. If you call on people, try to call them by name. What an easy way to make someone feel special!

Gather Tribes close to you while giving brief instructions. Have participants huddle in as closely as possible while you talk. Then gather a few volunteers to demonstrate. Save your voice, and ensure that everyone understands your directions clearly. And keep your instructions brief—remember, the object is to play!

Play a role! You are a citizen of Babylon, so instead of saying "Kids back in Bible times played these games," you'll say things like "Kids here in Babylon love to play this game."

During VBS, participants will be encouraged to tell you (as well as the Marketplace shopkeepers and helpers) about our one true God. They'll learn that Daniel believed in one true God, but most of the ancient Babylonians believed in many gods. Play along with the role, encouraging participants to tell you more about the one true God. Agree to come along with them to opening or closing Celebrations.

Have fun! Smile! Make participants feel warmly welcomed at your games area. Don't just guide people in these unique experiences; you participate too! Have a blast with everyone as they experience ancient Babylon.



Palace Pointer

Be sure to wear a name tag, too, so people know *your* name.





Costuming

Your involvement will speak volumes to everyone who attends this Babylon VBS. So it's an excellent idea to dress in a Babylon-style costume as a fun way to set the stage. Check with the VBS Director to see if he or she will be providing a costume for you. Since ancient Babylon was a cosmopolitan city, you might consider wearing a Bible-times tunic with a shiny sash or jewelry.

Supplies

Remember, you'll only have one-quarter of the Tribes at one time. Check with your Director to see how many people you can expect at each session. Work with the Director to collect these supplies, which you'll use at each rotation.

Day 1

- attention-getter (such as a bell)
- sugar cubes (15-20 per participant)
- paper plates (1 per participant)
- wooden blocks (15-20 per group of 4)
- baskets (1 per group of 4)
- several sheets of poster board
- paper grocery sacks (approximately 60, to make 30 "bricks")
- newspaper or newsprint (enough to fill 30 grocery sacks)
- Celebration Music CD* or download card
- CD or media player

Day 2

- attention-getter
- slips of paper with numbers written on them
- bowl
- stuffed animal

Day 3

- attention-getter
- masking tape or ropes
- plastic spoons (1 per participant)
- large and small marshmallows, or use cotton balls (several per participant)
- paper wads (lots)
- stuffed animals (a variety of shapes and sizes)
- several baskets
- 4 small catapults
- 1 King Catapult
- Celebration Music CD* or download card
- CD or media player

Day 4

- attention-getter
- jump-ropes
- rags
- rolled-up sock or cardboard tube
- jingle bells
- Celebration Music CD* or download card
- CD or media player

Day 5

- attention-getter
- masking tape or powdered chalk
- bright-colored paper plates (1 per participant)
- 10-15 tennis balls
- 10-15 tube socks
- paper cups of water (1 per participant)

*available at group.com

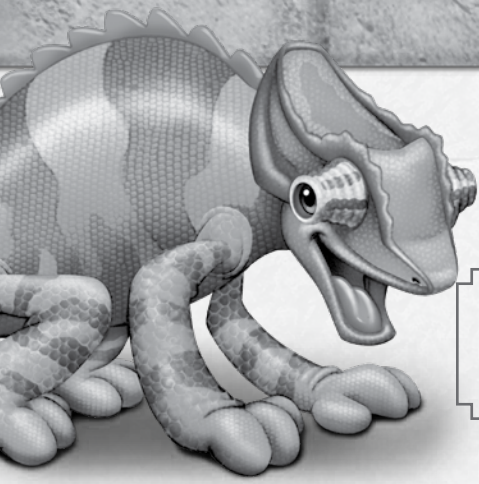
Palace Pointer

You may want to play songs from the Celebration Music CD during each games rotation — just plug in a portable music player and have the fun music playing in the background the entire time.

Palace Pointer

See page 35 for easy instructions to build catapults. You'll need a small catapult for each team and 1 King catapult.





Day 1

**Key Verse: "For God has said, 'I will never fail you.
I will never abandon you.'" (Hebrews 13:5)**

Bible Point: When things change, God is with you.

Why It Matters

Wow, talk about change! Daniel and his friends faced a new home (without their families), a new language, a new culture—a new everything! Yet they remained true to God. How easy it would have been to compromise, so far from home and faced with such difficult circumstances. The kids and adults in your VBS face similar challenges—new schools, new job situations, new family dynamics. Use today's activities to help kids and adults realize that, like Daniel and his friends, they can be *in* this world but not of it. Their identity can come from God—for God. No matter what changes they encounter, God will be with them!

Bible Story: Enemies capture Daniel and his friends and take them to Babylon. (Daniel 1)

Read the Passage With This in Mind...

- By taking young men from royal families as hostages, Nebuchadnezzar not only gained promising recruits for his own service but also reminded the people back in Jerusalem that they should not revolt against recently imposed Babylonian rule.
- The meat offered to the captives was probably taken from animals sacrificed to the patron gods of Babylon (Marduk, Nebo, and Ishtar, as examples). The wine, too, was most likely tainted by cultic usage.
- The menu for the captives came from the king's own kitchens. Refusing the food could have branded Daniel and his friends as being uncooperative and might easily have spoiled their chances for advancement.
- Rejecting the menu could also be seen as rejecting the king and could result in the very real threat of severe punishment. (Ancient kings, including Nebuchadnezzar, were capable of extreme cruelty!)
- God moved the Babylonian authorities to regard Daniel with respect and affection. He also graced Daniel and his friends with superior intellect. God showed he was with them all the way!



Day 1 Palace Playground

Before Tribes Arrive...

Gather the following supplies:

- ☐ attention-getter (such as a bell)
- ☐ sugar cubes (15-20 per participant)
- ☐ paper plates (1 per participant)
- ☐ wooden blocks (15-20 per group of 4)
- ☐ baskets (1 per group of 4)
- ☐ several sheets of poster board
- ☐ paper grocery sacks (approximately 60, to make 30 "bricks")
- ☐ newspaper or newsprint (enough to fill 30 grocery sacks)
- ☐ Celebration Music CD* or download card
- ☐ CD or media player

Fill 30 grocery sacks with crumpled newspaper or newsprint, and then slip an empty sack over each open end. Pile the paper bricks on one side of the playing area.

When Tribes Arrive...

1. Welcome the Tribes to Palace Playground, and introduce yourself. Ask:

(?) I haven't seen you here in Babylon before. Where are you from?

2. Say: **Welcome to Palace Playground! We call this place Palace Playground, but *all* the kids in Babylon (not just kids in the palace) play games like we're going to play all week. Each day we'll play games so you can discover more about life in Babylon. Our king, Nebuchadnezzar, is known across the land for his amazing buildings. He made all the buildings so people would know how rich and powerful he is. Ask:**

(?) What do buildings look like where you're from?

Say: **Interesting! In Babylon, we make buildings out of things like clay and dried mud. Let's use a variety of supplies and try our hand at building too!**

3. Lead Tribes in the following games.
4. When you hear the timekeeper's signal, dismiss your group to its next activities.



Field Test Finding

Be sure to fill paper sacks full of crumpled newspaper. Some of our bricks were "newspaper-lite," and they collapsed during the building games. A lesson to never skimp on proper building supplies!





Gotcha!

1. Ask everyone to stand in a circle. Say: **Everyone knows that two of the most important tools a builder needs are** (wave your hands in front of you) **hands! So let's loosen up our fingers before we tackle a building project.**
2. Have everyone introduce themselves to the "builders" standing on either side of them. Then have everyone place their left hand palm up, and their right index finger pointing down and touching on the neighbor's outstretched palm.
3. Say: **When I ring the bell, you builders gotta do two things: Grab the finger in your left hand, and try to keep your right finger from being grabbed. Ready? Pause. Are you really ready? Pause. You sure?** Ring the bell.
4. Repeat a few times. Then have everyone shake out their fingers and find a new place in the circle. Have everyone introduce themselves to the new "builders" standing on either side. Play the game again.



Pillar Pileup

1. Gather everyone next to the pile of paper “bricks.” Say: **King Nebuchadnezzar sure does like to build stuff. He made the gorgeous Hanging Gardens—lots of beautiful flowers and green vines that rest on big pillars. The pillars are made of baked bricks.** Hold up a paper “brick” like it’s really heavy. **Bricks kind of like this.** Toss it in the air so everyone sees how light it is. **Maybe not quite like this! Hmmm, you seem like pretty young builders, so maybe we’d better start off with something a little smaller.**
2. Give each person a pile of 15-20 sugar cubes on a paper plate. Allow 1 minute for individuals to stack their cubes as tall as they can on the paper plate. Call time after 1 minute, and see how tall the stacks are. (Have fun with your role, walking around like a contractor who’s encouraging their work.) Say: **Well, I guess I can trust you with a bigger challenge. Are you sure you’re up to the task?**
3. Next, have each person join two or three others to form a group. Give each group a basket of 15-20 wooden blocks. Give the groups 1 minute to stack their blocks as tall as they can. Call time after 1 minute, and see how tall the stacks are. Scratch your chin thoughtfully as you comment on the different stacks and surprising abilities of the builders. Say: **Well, you’re certainly fast learners. I think we’re ready for the big stuff! Let’s try to build tall pillars from this pile of bricks!**
4. Form two teams, and have them stand on the side of the playing area opposite the pile of paper bricks. Say: **Your team will have 1 minute to build a pillar from the bricks! Only one person at a time can run to pick up a brick. Keep sending people to the brick pile to get a brick and run it over to the rest of your group. If you’re not running, you’re helping to build. Each team will build their own tall pillar. Ready? Let’s build!**

Give teams 1 minute to stack the bricks as tall as they can. Call time after 1 minute, and see how tall the pillars are.
5. Play one more round, having teams work together to build *one* pillar as tall as they can.

Palace Pointer

Ask the teenage Palace Playground Pals to assist you during games. They could help distribute and collect supplies, getting them ready for the next games rotation.



Field Test Finding

Be sure to call this game “Pillar Pileup.” Some leaders at the field test encouraged kids to “build really tall towers,” which led to talking about the Tower of Babel. We won’t get into that story for this VBS. Maybe another year!





Through the Gate

1. Gather everyone, and say: **Here in Babylon, one of the things we're *most* proud of is King Nebuchadnezzar's Ishtar Gate.** Ask:

? Did you see it as you came into town?

Act surprised if people tell you they didn't see it or don't know what you're talking about. Say: **Well, you must have come in the *back door*...because *everyone* who comes to Babylon can't miss it! It's a huge, massive, glittering, gorgeous blue and gold wall and arch. It is truly amazing. How about if we work together and build a mini version of the Ishtar Gate? I know our mini gate will be truly amazing too. Let's build!**

2. Encourage everyone to use the sheets of poster board and the paper bricks to build a mini Ishtar Gate. When it's complete, play this game (like "London Bridge").
3. Play the theme song "Through It All" (CD track 1) while everyone walks through the arch and around in a circle. Stop the song after about a minute. Whoever is under the arch when the music stops will shout "Welcome to Babylon!" and give a high-five to three people.