

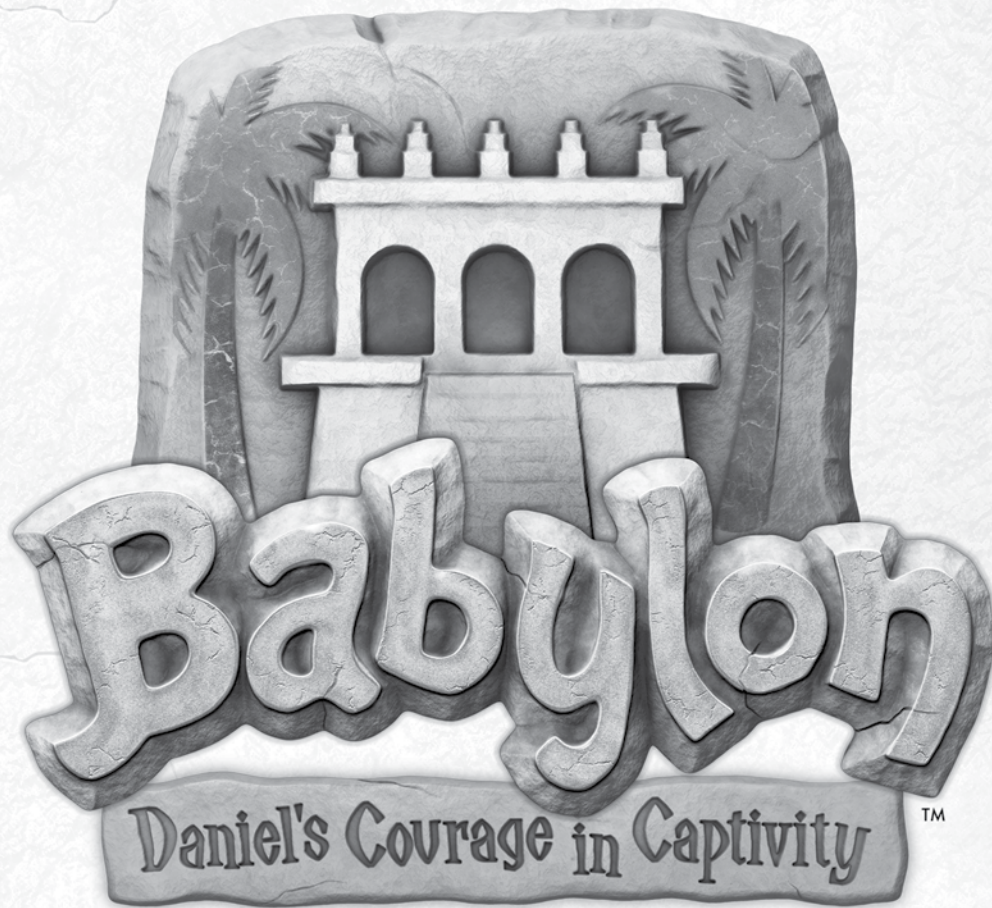
Tribe Time

LEADER MANUAL

VOLUNTEER



Babylon
Daniel's Courage in Captivity



Tribe Time

LEADER MANUAL



LOVELAND, COLORADO
GROUP.COM/VBS

Group



2023 HOLY LAND ADVENTURE VBS

Babylon

Daniel's Courage in Captivity™

TRIBE TIME LEADER MANUAL

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Credits

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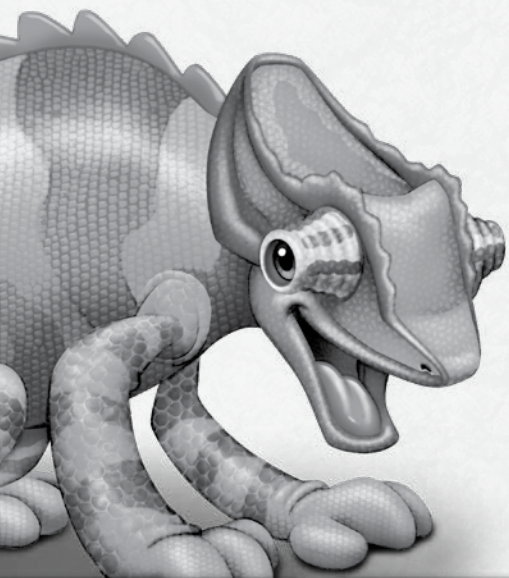


Babylon

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	Celebration
6:15–6:30	Tribe Time	Tribe Time	Tribe Time	Tribe Time
6:30–6:45	Daniel's Adventures	Palace Playground	Visit Marketplace	
6:45–7:00	Palace Playground	Daniel's Adventures		
7:00–7:15	Visit Marketplace		Daniel's Adventures	Palace Playground
7:15–7:30			Palace Playground	Daniel's Adventures
7:30–7:45	Tribe Time	Tribe Time	Tribe Time	Tribe Time
7:45–8:00	Celebration	Celebration	Celebration	Celebration

TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:



Welcome to Babylon!

We're glad you're a part of this exciting Holy Land Adventure. During this event, families will explore the culture of ancient Babylon when Daniel and his friends were in captivity. As a Tribe Leader, you'll direct a group of up to 10 children and adults (your Tribe) through experiences that have an authentic, traditional Bible-times feel. As Tribes explore the culture of ancient Babylon, you'll help them understand that God is always with us, just as God was with Daniel so long ago. Kids and adults will walk away with the comfort of knowing that God will be with them when things change, when we need help, when we're afraid, when we're lonely, and even when we're thankful.

Did You Know?



Bible scholars believe that Daniel and his friends were taken from Jerusalem around 605 B.C., several years *before* Nebuchadnezzar actually destroyed Jerusalem in 586 B.C. Daniel 1:21 reveals that Daniel remained in Babylon until at least 539 B.C. — at *least* 66 years!.



What's a Tribe Leader?

Building Relationships

Tribe Leaders are the heart and soul of Babylon VBS. The time children and adults spend with their Tribes at Tribe Time will be memorable, life-changing, and thought-provoking! This manual contains the information you need to lead a successful Tribe Time. Your leadership is a vital element to the success of this program.

Tribe Leader Tips

Attend scheduled staff training. Your Babylon VBS Director will likely set up training for all staff who will serve. Plan to attend this important meeting so you can get the big picture of how your role fits into this exciting and unique program.

Familiarize yourself with this manual. Read each day's Bible background, Scripture, and activities. That way you'll be prepared to give your Tribe members accurate information and not have to refer to the instructions as you're leading each activity. You may want to highlight certain portions so it's easy to facilitate the experiences at a glance.

Use your Bible. It's important for Tribe members to see you looking up Scripture passages and reading them directly from the Bible. This reminds everyone that the stories they are learning come from God's Word. It's a good idea to mark each day's Bible passage ahead of time so you can turn to it quickly.

Check out Postcards From the Palace. Every day, Tribe members will take home a tear-out page from this colorful little book that's packed with Bible-times info, God Sightings (see page 21), and ways to live out the Bible Point at home... long after VBS ends. They'll especially enjoy Daniel's "postcards" to his family, giving unique insight and perspective into each day's Bible adventure.

Palace Pointer

Your VBS Director will make sure Tribes contain no more than 10 members and (ideally) *two* Tribe Leaders. Through field testing and customer feedback, we've discovered that larger groups can become unmanageable and cause frustration. Plus, smaller groups maximize important relationship-building time. We've also discovered it's best when Tribe Leaders can attend VBS every day and avoid having to get substitutes. Consistent leadership helps Tribe members get to know each other throughout the week.



Smile! Be a friendly face that Tribe members look forward to seeing. It's likely that you'll have Tribe members who are new to your church, so be sure to welcome everyone with friendliness and warmth.

Call each person by name. This is one of the easiest ways to affirm and encourage the people in your Tribe. Make sure each member feels valued and welcomed.

Get to know your Tribe members. Ask about their families, hobbies, and kids' favorite subjects in school. Where have they been on vacation? What movies have they recently seen? What pets do they have? What would they pack on a trip to the moon? Take a real interest in your Tribe members' lives.

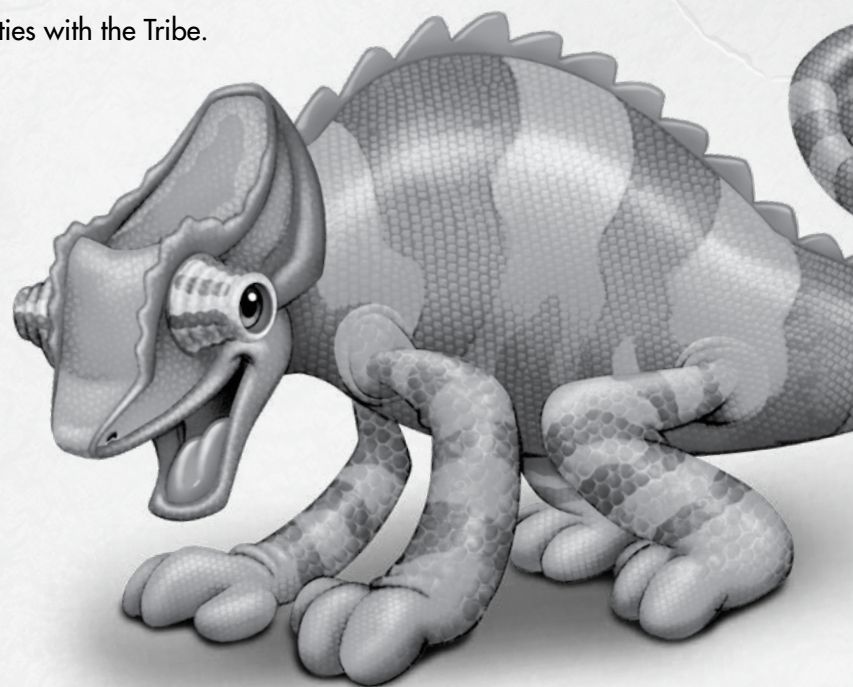
Keep children safe. Keep your Tribe together as much as possible so children are never alone. If a child needs to use the restroom, take a few kids with you, and leave the rest with your Assistant Tribe Leader. Only release kids to a parent or authorized caregiver.

Encourage adults to join in the fun! Reassure adults that shopkeepers have plenty of supplies and that you want them to participate too. The more involved everyone gets, the more meaningful the program will be for all ages.

Tools for Success

A Tribe Leader is a friend and a helper who...

- draws others into discussions as much as possible.
- offers choices and asks questions.
- encourages Tribe members.
- participates in all of the Holy Land Adventure activities with the Tribe.
- helps and encourages other staff members.



Palace Pointer

It's a good idea to read the first few chapters of the book of Daniel ahead of time. The stories in Daniel are oftentimes "Sunday-school-ized" (told so often that many details get changed, left out, or downplayed), and we may forget some of the actual events that surrounded Daniel's time in Babylon. Look at these adventures with a fresh set of eyes, just as *many* of the people at your VBS will!

The Voice of Truth

Remember that you are the voice of truth! When King Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, the king ordered that the best and brightest young men of Judah's royal family be captured and taken to Babylon. There, men like Daniel were immersed in Babylonian language, culture, religion, and politics. They may have been the only God-followers in Babylon—a nation that worshipped many false gods and observed dark, evil practices. In ancient Babylon, you'll be one of the few people who *does* know the truth about God (just like Daniel)!

Keep drawing your Tribe members back to the truth of what we believe by saying things like "You know what? Daniel isn't the only one in Babylon who believes in the one true God. We do too!" Or "Let's always be ready to share our belief in God."

As you lead your Tribe in conversation during each Tribe Time, use child-friendly language to point out that Daniel was surrounded by people who didn't believe in God...and yet he remained faithful in his love for and worship of God.

Lead your Tribe members in sharing with shopkeepers the things you believe about God. Encourage your Tribe members to invite Marketplace shopkeepers and others they meet to join them in the opening and closing Celebrations. Their guests can learn about God and join in worshipping and praising him.



What's a Tribe?

In Genesis 49, Jacob gathered his sons to give them his final blessing and prophecies. Verse 28 begins, "These are the twelve tribes of Israel." It is estimated that approximately 400 years elapsed between the end of Genesis and the book of Exodus. So it was not Jacob's sons but their descendants who led their people through the desert and into the Promised Land. When the people settled in Canaan, they began to grow crops, which they had to defend from marauders and invading armies. Over the years, tribal distinctions faded as the Israelites grew as a nation.

In Genesis 48:5, Jacob "adopts" Joseph's two sons—Ephraim and Manasseh—as his own. Later, in Numbers 1:32-35, you'll find that the Tribe of Joseph isn't listed; it has been divided into the Tribe of Ephraim and the Tribe of Manasseh. So why aren't there 13 tribes? Read Numbers 3 and see how God sets the Tribe of Levi apart for service as priests. The Levites "step out," so to speak, so there were still only 12 tribes. To keep things simple, we've based the 12 tribes included in Babylon on the Genesis 49 passage, which lists all of Jacob's sons.

For our purposes in Babylon, Tribes give children and adults a taste of Israel's culture and identity. A Tribe is a group of up to 10 people, led by a Tribe Leader (that's you) and an Assistant Tribe Leader. We've given symbols for each Tribe, based on the scant information available in Scripture.

Palace Pointer

We were delighted at how easily kids and adults joined together to form one large Tribe. Our Tribe Leaders found that the dynamics were better in groups that had a larger age span than in those Tribes made up of kids in a similar age group. Also, having mixed-age groups diminished discipline problems!



The Twelve Tribes of Israel



Asher
אָשֶׁר

The name **Asher** means “happy.” Asher was a farmer. Jacob blessed Asher, saying, “Asher will produce rich foods, food fit for kings” (Genesis 49:20). The date palm on this banner symbolizes Asher’s abundant crops.



Benjamin
בִּנְיָמִן

Jacob characterized **Benjamin** as having a vicious and warlike attitude, like the wolf found on his banner. Jacob said, “Benjamin is a wolf that prowls. He devours his enemies in the morning, and in the evening he divides the plunder” (Genesis 49:27).



Dan
דָּן

Dan’s name means “judgment.” Jacob predicted that the people of Dan would turn against God’s people, saying, “He will be a snake beside the road, a poisonous viper along the path, that bites the horse’s heels so the rider is thrown off” (Genesis 49:17).



Gad
גָּד

Enemies continually harassed the tribe of **Gad**, but Gad was always able to overcome the enemy. This tribe became known as fierce warriors. Jacob said, “Gad will be plundered by marauding bands; but he will turn and plunder them” (Genesis 49:19). The tent on the banner symbolizes a military encampment.



Issachar
יִשָּׂכָר

Issachar was a student of the Torah. Issachar’s tribe received fertile lands between two mountains. In Genesis 49:14-15, Jacob said, “Issachar is a strong beast of burden, resting among the sheepfolds...he will bend his shoulder to the task.” The donkey on this banner symbolizes the humility and hard work of Issachar’s people.



Joseph
יוֹסֵף

Jacob’s favorite son, **Joseph**, received a bounty of blessings. Jacob said, “Joseph is a fruitful tree, a fruitful tree beside a fountain...May the blessings of your ancestors be greater than the blessings of the eternal mountains” (Genesis 49:22-26). That’s why you’ll find wheat—a symbol of fertility and prosperity—on his tribal banner.



Judah
יְהוּדָה

Judah was one of Jacob’s favorite sons, a leader among his brothers. He even offered himself as a sacrifice when his brothers begged Joseph for grain. Jacob blessed Judah, saying, “You will defeat your enemies. All your relatives will bow before you” (Genesis 49:8). The lion on Judah’s banner symbolizes strength and power. (Daniel and his friends were from the tribe of Judah.)



Levi
לֵוִי

Levi was cursed, along with his brother Simeon. Jacob said, “I will scatter their descendants throughout the nation of Israel” (Genesis 49:7). Later, Levi’s descendants obeyed Moses, and Moses made them priests (Exodus 32:25-29). The design on the banner stands for the breastplate (or ephod) worn by Israelite priests. Each stone represents one of the tribes of Israel.



Naphtali
נַפְתָּלִי

The symbol for **Naphtali** is a deer. That’s because in Jacob’s blessing, he said, “Naphtali is a deer let loose, producing magnificent fawns” (Genesis 49:21). The tribe of Naphtali was swift to rush troops to battle to avenge the lands, unlike other tribes, who held back.



Reuben
רְאוּבֵן

Even though **Reuben** was the first son born to Jacob, he lost his right to half the inheritance and his right to leadership. Jacob said, “Reuben, you are my oldest son, the child of my vigorous youth...but you are as unruly as the waves of the sea” (Genesis 49:3-4). The wild waves on this banner are a reminder of Reuben’s undisciplined nature.



Simeon
שִׁמְעוֹן

Simeon was Jacob’s second son. He and his brother Levi took revenge on a prince who had hurt their sister. They stole donkeys, sheep, and even women and children from the town. The city gates on the banner represent the city of Shechem, where Simeon showed his cruelty. Jacob said, “Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce; cursed be their wrath, for it is cruel” (Genesis 49:7).



Zebulun
זֶבֻּלֻן

The ship symbol for **Zebulun** reflects what Jacob said of him: “Zebulun will settle on the shores of the sea and will be a harbor for ships” (Genesis 49:13). The tribe of Zebulun was expert in warfare. The book of Judges tells how brave and willing Zebulun and Naphtali were to risk their lives for God’s cause.

Costuming and Supplies

Your VBS Director will coordinate collecting costumes and supplies. However, you can join in the fun by creating your own Bible-times costume. A simple robe or tunic, belt or sash, and sandals will suffice. (Remember, people in Bible-times did wear bright colors, so it's okay to wear something lively and cheery!) You also will wear a Bandura (a colorful stretchy tube that can be worn in a number of ways), since each Tribe is designated their own color for Banduras and Tribe name posters.

Your Director will provide a basket with the Tribe Time items you need each day, a "home base" blanket where your Tribe will gather, and your Tribe poster.



Supply Basket Checklist

Each day, your basket will need to be stocked with the following:

- ☐ Tribe Time Teaching Kit*
- ☐ Banduras* (1 per Tribe member, including you)
- ☐ God Sightings Animal Tiles* (set of 5)
- ☐ marker
- ☐ Glue Dots* or masking tape (to attach God Sightings Animal Tiles to a wall)
- ☐ darics* (coins—3 per Tribe member)
- ☐ coin pouches* (1 per Tribe member)
- ☐ daily schedule showing the order your Tribe will rotate through the activities (you'll get a new one each day)
- ☐ Bible for a handy reference
- ☐ bookmark to mark each day's Scripture passage (optional)
- ☐ Bible Memory Makers* (1 set per Tribe member—even adults)
- ☐ Postcards From the Palace student books* (1 per Tribe member)
- ☐ name badges*

* available at group.com or your Group VBS supplier

Palace Pointer

You may want to keep one set of Bible Memory Makers with you during the week for quick reference to the Bible verses.





Here's What You'll Do

Before Participants Arrive...

- Plan to arrive *at least* 20 minutes early (especially on the first day of the program), and let the Director know you're there. He or she might have specific instructions or hold a Tribe Leader meeting.
- Find your Tribe "home base" (the blanket where you'll gather for each Tribe Time), and locate your basket of supplies. Check through your supply basket, and be sure it has been stocked (or restocked) with all the necessary supplies for that day.
- Make sure your Tribe name poster is taped to the wall next to your home base.
- Get a list of your Tribe members from the registrar or Director. (This list may change as participants arrive, since some will not have preregistered, so be flexible!)
- Look over your daily schedule to see what's in store for your Tribe today and find out which lettered group you'll travel with.

When Participants Arrive...

- After participants register or sign in each day, they'll join you at your home base. Introduce yourself, and be sure your Tribe members know each other's names. Introduce any newcomers to the group. Help each Tribe member feel welcome.
- Write names on the name badges, if those weren't given to Tribe members at registration.
- Help everyone put on their colorful Banduras. Tell them this designated color represents their Tribe for the week. Participants can choose how they want to wear their Bandura, such as on their head or as an armband.

Opening Celebration (15 minutes)

- When the Celebration Leader begins, gather with the other Tribes for opening singing and worship.
- Participate in singing and getting to know everyone.
- When the opening Celebration time is finished, lead your Tribe back to your home base.

Opening Tribe Time (15 minutes)

- Prepare Tribe members for their trip to Babylon, where Daniel and his friends have been taken captive.
- Help Tribe members get to know each other as they discuss what life must have been like in ancient Babylon.
- Lead activities like learning Bible verses, choosing Marketplace shops to visit, and giving Tribe members a daily mission to accomplish, such as inviting others to the Celebrations.

Daniel's Adventures (15 minutes)

- Lead your Tribe to Daniel's home, and wait outside for Daniel to greet you. Each day, Ashpenaz—the royal chief of staff—will stop in to visit with Daniel.
- Sit with your Tribe, and encourage everyone to listen and participate.
- Visit with Daniel, and learn about what he's been going through as a God-follower in Babylon. Your Tribe members will experience the comfort of knowing that God is with them, no matter what challenges or triumphs they're experiencing.

Palace Playground (15 minutes)

- Lead your Tribe to the Palace Playground area, and wait for the leader to begin.
- Encourage everyone to listen to the Palace Playground Leader's instructions.
- Join in the fun, and help younger children, if necessary. Participate in the games wholeheartedly. Your participation will speak volumes to your Tribe members!

Visit Marketplace (30 minutes)

- Divide your Tribe into two groups for "exploring." One group will stay with you, and the other will go with the Assistant Tribe Leader. Let Tribe members work together to determine which shops they'll visit each day.
- Before heading into the Marketplace, remind Tribe members that they can visit two shops each day, plus purchase a snack in the Food Court. Each Tribe member has three darics (or coins) to spend in the Marketplace.
- Become apprentices at things like creating a hanging garden or making nameplates. Enjoy Bible-times snacks such as fruit, veggies, and bread. (And locusts...if you're brave!) Be sure to visit the Astronomy School early in the week, since the Glow Globe is a two-day project.
- Encourage everyone to listen to the shopkeepers and ask questions about how projects or tasks might be done in ancient Babylon.



Palace Pointer

Each day, every Tribe member will have three darics to spend in the Marketplace. At our field test, we discovered that this helped kids pace themselves so they didn't try to rush through all the crafts in a couple of days. Plus, kids liked having the grown-up feeling of spending money!

Palace Pointer

The shops in the Marketplace will be open all week. If your group goes to a shop but discovers it's already full, remind them that they can go another day. Tribes should have the opportunity to visit each shop at some point during their experience in ancient Babylon.

- Assist young children with any projects they choose to do. *Tribes will have 30 minutes, so encourage everyone to take their time and work at a comfortable pace.*
- Once Tribe members are working on their own, feel free to become an apprentice yourself! Keep an eye on kids who might need a hand with a certain element of a project. And encourage adults to participate and create their own projects, too.

Closing Tribe Time (15 minutes)

- Gather Tribe members for a closing Tribe Time. Help Tribe members connect what they've learned in ancient Babylon to real life through simple object lessons, discussions, and experiences. You'll find the unique supplies for these surprising, memorable activities in your Tribe Time Teaching Kit.
- Distribute a Bible Memory Maker each day. Bible Memory Makers are special tokens, each with the day's Bible verse printed on it. Participants will put their Bible Memory Makers in their coin pouches (or into their Mosaic Memory Boxes once they make one in the Mosaic Studio). At the end of the week, they can take the Bible Memory Makers home as lasting keepsakes, reminding them of their time in ancient Babylon.
- Hand each person that day's Postcard From the Palace. Families will take these home each day as a reinforcement of what they've learned and how to live out God's Word in everyday life.
- Gather Banduras, coin pouches, and leftover darics that were not spent in the Marketplace so you can use them the next day.
- Give the leftover darics to the Director, who will redistribute three darics for each coin pouch every day.
- When you hear the attention-getter, you will know it's time to lead your Tribe members to the closing Celebration.



Closing Celebration (15 minutes)

- Participate in singing or other activities as directed by the Celebration Leader.
- Keep your Tribe together until parents or caregivers come for kids. *Do not* let kids wander off on their own! Remember, you're responsible for their safety.
- Let Tribe members know you're looking forward to seeing them tomorrow.
- Be sure participants take home their Marketplace projects and each day's Postcard From the Palace.

What Do I Do If...?

What do I do if my Tribe won't stay together between activities?

Work with your Tribe members to develop special routes and fun ways to travel between stations. Pretend to be a galloping donkey caravan, a skipping herd of sheep, or a swimming school of fish. Be creative, and challenge kids and adults to think of new (and cooperative) ways to move from place to place.

What do I do if older kids are unhappy being grouped with mixed ages?

Highlight older kids' helping roles by telling younger kids, "[Name of older child] is really good at that. Why don't you ask him [or her] to help you?" Older kids will enjoy being respected and looked up to, and younger children won't demand so much of your attention. Plus, older kids learn just as much—or even more—when they help lead younger children during activities. And younger children will thrive on the special friendships they build with older kids!

What do I do if a Tribe member won't participate in discussion?

Ask follow-up questions to draw out shy or reluctant Tribe members. Use phrases such as "What do you mean by that?" or "That sounds interesting! Tell me more."

Accept the answers kids and adults give. Encourage participation by challenging Tribe members to offer as many different answers as they can think of. If participants offer answers that seem off base or contrary to your church's teaching, take time to follow up with them between activities or after your time in ancient Babylon. If you're not comfortable discussing their questions or concerns, refer them to your VBS Director or pastor.

If Tribe members don't respond to your encouragement, don't force them to participate. You may have introspective people in your group who need time to think quietly about the things you're discussing.



**What do I do if a Tribe member is too talkative or too active?**

To ensure that each person has a turn to share, try going around the circle and giving each member 30 seconds to share a response. Or occasionally ask children and adults to respond with one-word answers. You can even call on people by their birthdays, such as "I'd like anyone with a wintertime birthday to answer this one."

What do I do if someone asks me a question I can't answer?

Many families who come to your Babylon VBS have never been to church before, so you can expect lots of questions as you help kids and adults learn about God. If someone asks you a question you can't answer, don't be afraid to admit you don't know. Say something such as "That's a good question. Maybe our church's pastor would know the answer. Why don't we ask our pastor later today?"

What do I do if my Tribe finishes an activity early?

Here are some fun ideas if you need to fill a little time.

- Make up an affirming Tribe cheer that everyone can shout during the opening and closing Celebrations. (This was very popular at our field test!)
- See who can make the silliest face.
- Try to name Marketplace items that start with each letter of the alphabet (apple, beads, carpenter, and so on).
- Think of fun ways to affirm and thank each shopkeeper, such as giving them high-fives or a round of applause.
- Identify shopkeepers or other staff members your Tribe can invite to the opening or closing Celebrations.



Operation Kid-to-Kid™

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World Vision®

Building a better world for children

Kids Helping Kids

"Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path." (Psalm 119:105)

Most of us in North America have access to a Bible at home or on our phones. The comfort, hope, and truth of Scripture is within reach...whenever we want. Yet, for millions of people around the world, owning a Bible in their own language feels like an impossible luxury.

Bible stories or passages must be shared through word of mouth.

Sunday school teachers struggle to help children grow in faith, without access to Scripture.

In some communities, even pastors don't have a Bible in their own language.

But we can change that!

Group Publishing is partnering with World Vision and churches like yours to provide 400,000 Bibles to children and families around the world. That's a huge goal...so we're excited for *your* kids to tackle it!

"Knowing the Word of God prevents my son from getting involved with harmful friendships." — A mother in El Salvador

"I come to study God more every day, learning with the Bible. I enjoy reading about God and singing." — 9-year-old in Colombia

"I am thankful to my God for this gift. I will read it every day and share the stories with my two younger brothers." — 14-year-old in Kenya



Palace Pointer

Remember, please don't turn missions into a contest. This is truly an opportunity to serve. Encourage kids to participate, but don't offer bribes or rewards.

And once the Bibles are purchased, they're not simply handed out. Funding for the Bibles *also* allows local discipleship ministries to provide parenting classes, Bible clubs, VBS programs, and Sunday school classes (both in churches *and* schools). Kids learn to read Scripture in their own language and apply it through community service. Youth explore what it means to be made in God's image. God's Word brings light and unity to families. Children grow in faith and friendship with Jesus.

With Operation Kid-to-Kid, a \$12 donation provides a Bible in a language that's accessible for kids in African nations, Latin America, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe.

We're excited to join your VBS kids in this huge, world-changing goal! Through your kids' generosity and care, we'll shine Jesus' light to families around the globe—maybe for the first time.

Because Operation Kid-to-Kid is part of every Group VBS, we have the opportunity to bless countless families around the globe! Join us in shining Jesus' light in this powerful way!

Making It Part of VBS

Operation Kid-to-Kid is part of the Marketplace—a place everyone visits every day! Here, your leader will explain this meaningful service project with the help of an eye-catching poster set and other tactile items. Participants can even make small night lights—reminders of the truth in Psalm 119:105. Make outreach an integral, faith-building part of your program.

(For more information about Operation Kid-to-Kid, check out ok2k.org.)



God Sightings™

Seeing God Every Day

God hasn't retired, you know.

He's as busy now as he's ever been.

But until you see that with your own eyes, it's tough to have a vibrant faith. God can seem distant or impersonal.

God *is* active in our everyday lives—we just have to learn to look. We have to make it a habit to keep an eye out for the daily overwhelming evidence that God is doing great things all around us.

At Babylon, you'll encourage kids and adults to look for God Sightings—everyday clues that God is present, passionate, and powerful. A God Sighting is simply an acknowledgment that God has done something. It's giving God credit where credit is due. It's developing a God-focused view and a grateful heart. Kids and adults will discover that they can see God in things like Scripture, people, circumstances, and nature.

As participants—even preschoolers—make God Sightings part of everyday life, their faith will grow. Why? Because they'll actually see God at work. Not because he's suddenly shown up but because they finally have eyes to see...and at last, they're looking.

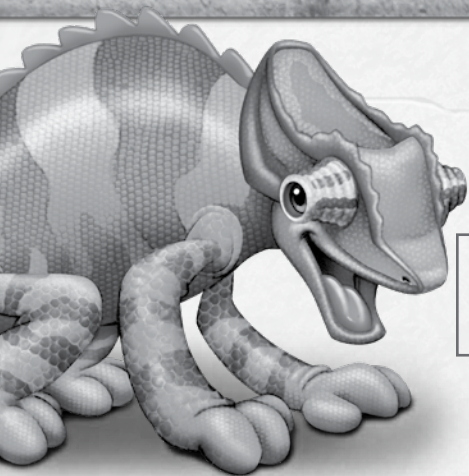
A Mosaic Memorial

In ancient Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar had an enormous wall built outside his palace. Much of that wall shone with blue and gold mosaic designs, picturing lions, dragons, and oxen. At your Babylon VBS, adults and kids will create their own dazzling wall that shines with tributes to God!

At the end of Day 1, the Celebration Leader will explain God Sightings and challenge kids and adults to start looking for things that God has done or made and to practice *being* a God Sighting by sharing God's love.

Then each day, starting on Day 2, when the Celebration Leader dismisses Tribes to their Tribe Time after the opening, Tribe members will spend about five minutes sharing God Sightings. Tribe Leaders will write on the God Sightings Animal Tiles, using single words or short phrases to capture the God Sightings shared within the Tribe. One Tribe member will take the God Sightings Animal Tile and attach it to the blue tile wall that has been prepared earlier. This is such a cool tribute to God's power and grace in our lives!





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!

For Day 1 you'll need...

- map (see page 26)
- Bible marked at Hebrews 13:5
- Day 1 schedule (from your Director)
- darics (3 per Tribe member)
- coin pouches (1 per Tribe member)
- Color-Changing Paper (in the Tribe Time Teaching Kit)
- pair of scissors
- pens or pencils (1 per Tribe member per rotation)
- Day 1 Bible Memory Makers (1 per Tribe member)
- Chameleon God Sightings Animal Tile (as a sample—will be used on Day 2)
- Postcards From the Palace, Day 1 cards (1 per Tribe member)

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 Opening Tribe Time

1. As Tribe members arrive...

Gather the Tribe members on your home base blanket, and introduce yourself. Be sure each person receives a Bandura and a name badge with his or her name on it.

Say: **Welcome to Babylon—a big Bible-times city! We’re going to have so much fun this week as we pretend to go on a trip back to Bible times! We’ll get to visit with people who had incredible adventures—adventures that *really* happened!**

Point to the palace area or your Babylon set, and say: **That’s where King Nebuchadnezzar lives.** Ask:

❓ **What would you like best about being a king or queen?**

❓ **What would be the hardest thing about being a king or queen?**

Let participants discuss the questions until it’s time for Celebration to begin. When the Celebration Leader begins, gather with other Tribes for the opening time of singing and worship.

2. After the opening Celebration, gather Tribe members again on the home base blanket.

Make sure each person has a name badge and a colorful Bandura with your Tribe name on it. Let everyone share their first and last names.

Say: **Our last names show that we’re related to people with that last name. In Bible times, God’s people were divided into Tribes, or family groups. So a Tribe name was kind of like a family name.**

Point to the Tribe name poster, and tell kids and adults their Tribe name for the week.

Say: **Instead of being [child’s first and last name], you would be [child’s first name] from the Tribe of [your Tribe name]. These fun Banduras match the color of our Tribe name poster. Every time you see a Bandura this color, you’ll know that’s one of our Tribe members!**

Palace Pointer

Have the Tribe members write their names on their coin pouches and Banduras. They’ll use them throughout the week.

Palace Pointer

The Tribe name poster contains information about your Tribe’s history. You can read histories of the other Tribes on page 12. Some Tribes have a fairly negative or barbaric history. Rather than focusing on the shortcomings of Jacob’s sons, talk about how we don’t have to repeat the wrong things our families do. Point out that God loves us and forgives us, and we can have a fresh, new start when we choose to follow God.



Palace Pointer

If you have older kids and adults, you may want to mention that ancient Babylon is located in modern-day Iraq. Many older kids may have heard of Iraq on the news or in studying history at school.

3. Where is Babylon?

Say: **All week, we'll pretend to go on a trip back to Bible times. Babylon was a city in the country of Babylonia.** Show everyone the map (p. 26). Point to the approximate area of your town, and then point to Babylon. **We'll visit with a guy named Daniel. Daniel used to live here** (show everyone Jerusalem on the map), **but when the Babylonians took over his city, he was captured and brought more than 500 miles to Babylon! Daniel was taken away from his family and now has to serve King Nebuchadnezzar. I'll bet he's having some adventures in the palace!**

Most people in Babylon don't believe in the one true God. They serve lots of fake gods. We'll have a chance to tell them the truth about God! That's going to be cool.

4. Learn the key Bible verse.

Say: **Today we'll learn that when things change, God is with you. Open the Bible to today's verse. The Bible tells us that's true! In the Bible book of Hebrews, chapter 13, verse 5, it says, "For God has said, 'I will never fail you. I will never abandon you.' " Abandon means "to leave alone." Ask:**

? Tell about a time you felt abandoned or alone. Let each Tribe member share, if time allows.

Say: **God will never leave you alone. When things change, God is with you. Teach Tribe members these actions to help them remember the Bible verse.**

Field Test Finding

On the first day, kids were so excited by all of the opportunities in the Marketplace that it was a challenge to keep them from jumping from one shop to the next. We found it was important—and easy—to simply explain that Tribes would work on two projects each day while in the Marketplace. Once we'd set the expectation, kids realized they could slow down and take their time in each shop.



"For God has said,..."



"... 'I will never fail you. I will never abandon you.' "

5. Look at the schedule.

Bring out the schedule for Day 1.

Say: **Each day in Babylon, we'll play Bible-times games, explore the Marketplace shops, and visit Daniel. When we're in the Marketplace, we'll visit two shops each day, plus have a snack. So take your time! You'll have the whole week at Babylon to get to all the shops.**

Tell your Tribe members where you will be going first today. The shopkeepers, the Palace Playground Leader, and Daniel will repeat their activities several times each day, with a different group of Tribes each time. Look at the list of Marketplace shops you'll get to visit throughout the week (see margin). Remind everyone that the shops are open all week long; there will be plenty of time to visit them all!

Say: **When we go to another country, their money is different from ours. Since we'll be going to Babylon, we'll need some coins to spend. These are called darics (pronounced DARE-icks). We'll get to use these darics when we visit the Marketplace shops today.** Give each Tribe member three darics and a pouch to put them in.

6. Give Tribe members a mission to accomplish in the Marketplace.

Say: **Pretty soon we will hear a sound that lets us know that the Marketplace is open. When it's our turn to visit the shops, let's have a special mission—let's get to know the shopkeepers and greet them with a friendly smile or handshake. We want to get to know the shopkeepers because throughout the week, we'll share with them all we learn about God.**

When you hear the attention-getter, lead your Tribe on a fun adventure in ancient Babylon!



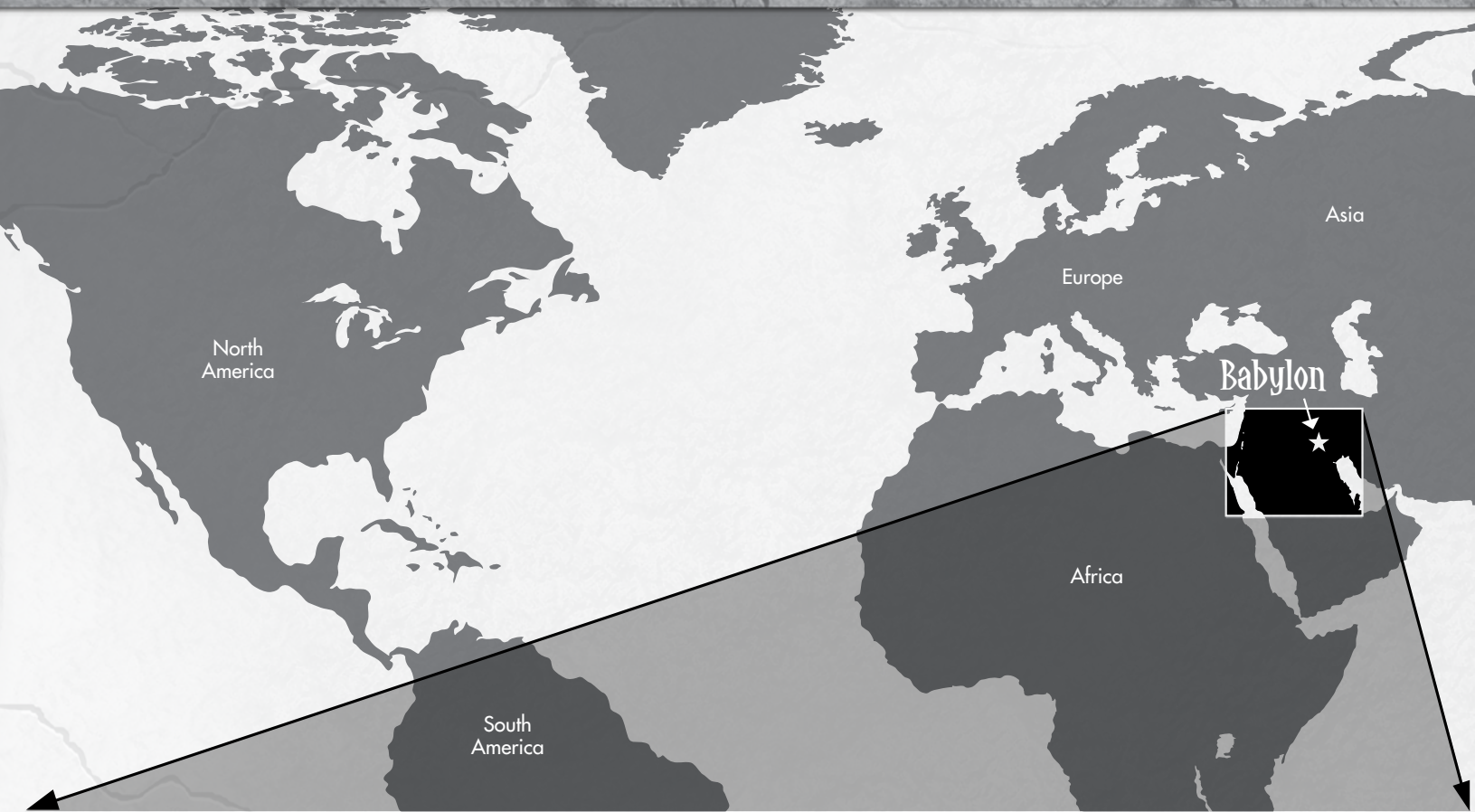
Marketplace Shops

- **Jewelry Bazaar**—Make a Hidden Message Medallion necklace.
- **Astronomy School**—Learn about the stars, and make a Glow Globe.
- **Metalworking Shop**—Craft a metallic nameplate.
- **Hanging Gardens Nursery**—Make a miniature version of the Hanging Gardens of Babylon.
- **Music Shop**—Make a flute.
- **Cylinder Seal Shop**—Create a working cylinder seal.
- **Mosaic Studio**—Create a mosaic design on a keepsake wooden box.
- **Royal Animal Courtyard**—Visit animals and pets.
- **Food Court**—Eat Bible-times food.
- **Operation Kid-to-Kid Tent**—Participants learn how they can help provide Bibles to kids around the world.

Palace Pointer

Before your Tribe experiences the Marketplace, form two smaller groups (you can take one group, while the Assistant Tribe Leader takes the other) and go to the shops you chose to visit. Remind Tribe members to stick together with their adult leader. It's easier to help kids interact with the shopkeepers and much easier to pull your Tribe back together for the next activity.





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Day 1 Closing Tribe Time

1. Circle up and review.

Gather your Tribe members on the home base blanket to talk about the day's events.

Say: **Today we met Daniel! I can't believe how much his life has changed since they took him from Jerusalem. Living in the king's palace, eating different food, getting a new name, and learning a new language. Wow! Ask:**

? What do you think was the hardest change for Daniel?

Let several Tribe members respond.

2. Bring out the sheets of Color-Changing Paper.

As you talk, quickly cut the 8½x11-inch sheets of paper into enough pieces so each person can have one.

Say: **We may not be captured and carried off to a strange country, but *our* lives change, too. Think of a time things really changed for you. Maybe you switched schools or you added a family member. Maybe you moved to a new house or new city. Think about a change that has happened in your life.**

Allow a bit of quiet "think time" while you cut. Then hand each person a piece of the color-changing paper. Set pens or pencils in the middle of the circle.

Say: **God was with you during that time. On the light side of this paper, draw a simple picture of God holding your hand. We don't know what God looks like, so there's no right or wrong way.**

Let Tribe members draw simple stick figures on the light side of the paper. Some people may start noticing that the other side of the paper changes color! That's okay! Allow about a minute or two for drawing, and then gather the pens. Direct each person to hold the paper so it's sandwiched between their hands. Ask:

? How does it feel to imagine God holding your hand during hard times?
(Good; comforting; happy; encouraging.)

Say: **The Bible reminds us, "For God has said, 'I will never fail you. I will never abandon you.'" Lead your Tribe in saying that passage together.**

Then continue: **Open your hands and look at the paper.** Ask:

? What do you notice? (The paper changed color; the paper is blue now!)

Say: **When things change, God is with you. He'll never leave you. He'll never fail you. When things in *your* life change—like the color on the paper changed—you can look at this paper and remember that God is still with you, holding your hand through it all.**



Palace Pointer

Be sure to distribute the Bible Memory Makers in the special way outlined in this manual. Tribe members will not only walk away with a keepsake but will also have a lasting memory of a meaningful affirmation or blessing.



Gather the papers so they're not a distraction. Reassure Tribe members that they can take their papers home at the end of today's session.

3. Bring out the Day 1 Bible Memory Makers.

Say: **That verse is so special—I want you to have a reminder of it. That's why each day in ancient Babylon, you'll each get a Bible Memory Maker to help you remember what you learned.**

Hold up the Bible Memory Maker, and show everyone the chameleon on it. Explain that a chameleon is a lizard that can change colors.

Say: **When you see this chameleon, you can remember that when things change, God is with you. And our awesome Bible verse is right here, too!** Turn the Memory Maker over and read the day's Bible verse on it: **"For God has said, 'I will never fail you. I will never abandon you' " (Hebrews 13:5).**

Life changed for Daniel in lots of big—and maybe scary—ways. But God never left Daniel. Even in a strange country, God hadn't failed or abandoned Daniel. When things change, God is with you, too.

Go around the circle, give each person a Bible Memory Maker, and say: [Name], **when things change, God is with you.** After each Tribe member receives the affirmation, have them link arms with the people on either side of them. Once everyone is linked in a circle, say a prayer thanking God for his faithful presence in our lives.

4. Explain God Sightings.

Say: **We have such an awesome God, who is with us every single day. Look at all the wonderful things God has created: our families, you, me, stars, sun, moon, animals, birds, and everything! All week long we are going to look for ways we see God in our lives. You'll be like detectives, looking for evidence of God all around you. Those things are called God Sightings.**

Show the Chameleon God Sightings Animal Tile. **This is a God Sightings Animal Tile. When we gather again tomorrow, we'll write our God Sightings on one of these. A God Sighting might be a hug, a beautiful sunrise or sunset, or a person being kind to you. Ask:**

(?) Where do you think you might see God after you leave Babylon?

Share an idea first, such as a tasty meal you ate today. Then let everyone share.



5. Hand out the Day 1 Postcard From the Palace.

Say: **I can't wait to hear how—and where—you see God. To help you learn to look for God, I have a cool postcard to give you.** Show the Postcards From the Palace Day 1 card, and point out some of the cool facts or information on it. Explain that the postcard will help families talk about and explore God Sightings, too! Plus, it even has a note from Daniel to his family back home.

6. Prepare for the closing Celebration.

Have everyone place their Bible Memory Makers in their coin pouches. Collect all the Banduras, coin pouches, and leftover darics, and put them in the basket. Have participants leave their craft projects from the Marketplace on the home base blanket until after the Celebration time. Make sure everyone comes back to the home base blanket to get those before leaving.

Palace Pointer

It's a good idea to have the pages torn from the Postcards From the Palace books ahead of time so Tribe members can quickly pick up each day's postcard after the closing Celebration.

