

# WEEK 1 LESSON GUIDE



## BIG IDEA

I won't give up —  
God is with me!

## BIBLE

**Babylonian Captivity:**  
Daniel 1

## WELCOME TIME

### MUSIC | Sing and Roar!

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** You can lead kids in worship with any songs of your choice, but here are some suggestions that go along with this month's theme. Make sure you have purchased any licenses required to play or perform these songs. For more information, [read this!](#)
  - "I'm Trusting You" (Lifetree Kids)
  - "Not Afraid" (Rend Co. Kids)
  - "With Me Every Day" (Yancy)
  - "Through It All" (Lifetree Kids)
  - "What You're Made For" (Lifeway Music)

### ACTIVITY | Let's Go to the Zoo

- Welcome to the Babylon Zoo, friends! I'm Zookeeper [Your Name]. Are you ready to *Hear Me Roar*? That's the name of our new series, and kind of my mantra for life in general. I love working here at the zoo because I get to see different kinds of fun animals!
- **Want to pretend you're one of our animal friends?**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Instruct the kids to stand on one side of an open activity area. Call out a zoo animal and have them pretend to be that animal while they move to another designated area. Explain how to play the game, using the following animals: giraffe, monkey, kangaroo, elephant, alligator. End with our theme animal: lion!
  - ✂ **TODDLER HACK:** Instead of having the kids move from one area to another, have them stand in a circle and do the animal motions when you call them out.

### ACTIVITY | Feed the Zoo Animals

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Divide the group into two teams and have them stand about three feet apart across from each other. Give one team "animal food" (packing peanuts) and the other team large cups to hold. Instruct them to toss the food to the other team, who will be the "animals" catching food in their plastic cups. Switch roles if time allows.

✳ **TODDLER HACK:** Prepare pictures of zoo animals. Use tape to attach a picture of each animal to its own cup. Allow children to drop the food directly into the cups instead of tossing them to other children. Play with caution as packing peanuts are a choking hazard for small children.

- Here at the Babylon Zoo, the animals get pretty hungry. Let's pretend to feed the animals!
- Thanks for helping to feed the animals! Today, we'll learn about four friends who ate lots of healthy food!

## STORY TIME

### SCRIPTURE | Daniel 1 (Babylonian Captivity)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Tell the story of Daniel 1 as though you're guiding kids through an exhibit at the Babylon Zoo, with the help of your [hand puppet friend Millie the Monkey](#) (save the other hand puppets in pack for future weeks). Remain in the zookeeper character.
- We've already had the chance to meet some incredible creatures that live here at the Babylon Zoo.
- As the zookeeper, it's my job to get to know some of them, and the other day I met four friends who were just as interesting as the animals we keep here.
- One of the guys, Daniel, told me his story. And I know it's true because I read about it in my Bible. But Daniel also told his story to my friend, Millie the Monkey. Hey Millie!
  - *[Bring out the monkey hand puppet and motion it to wave to the kids. Have the kids wave back.]*
- Millie, can you tell Daniel's story to my friends?
  - *[Using puppet, in a different voice]*
- Daniel and three of his friends just arrived here from a town called Jerusalem. It's kind of a sad story. You see, they were brought to Babylon by our king, a man named Nebuchadnezzar. Whew, that's a BIG name! Anyway, the king brought Daniel and his friends to work for him. It was so hard! They even got brand-new names! Listen to what Daniel told me.
  - *[Read Daniel 1:8–20 from a preschool Bible or a preschool-friendly translation.]*
- Isn't that amazing?! They loved God so much that they didn't eat the king's food because God told them not to. They ate only vegetables and water and were strong, healthy, and really smart!
- But they didn't choose to do this just because it made them healthy. They were far from home in a brand-new kingdom with brand-new rules. But they still remembered and wanted to obey God. They knew God was with them wherever they went.

### BIG IDEA | I won't give up — God is with me!

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** On a piece of paper, write today's Big Idea and place the paper in an envelope. Keep the envelope in a place that's easy for today's hand puppet to pick up when the time comes to reveal the Big Idea.
- Even though it was hard, Daniel and his friends didn't give up because God was with them! That's our Big Idea for today . . . but I wonder where we can find it. *[Look around for a few seconds and then look over at Millie, who's holding an envelope in her mouth.]*
- Thank you, Millie! Let's see what's inside.
- *[Open the envelope and read the Big Idea aloud.]* **I won't give up — God is with me!**
- Stand up and let's say this together:
  - **I won't give up** — *(shake head from side to side)*
  - **God** *(point up)*
  - **is with me!** *(use thumbs to point to self)*

## VIDEO | Hear Me Roar, Episode 1

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play this week's episode of [Cali's World](#).

## ACTIVITY | Obstacle Course

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Kids will complete an obstacle course by doing a different animal movement throughout the course: elephant trunk stroll, squirrel jog (walk along a strip of painter's tape on the floor like a tightrope), snake slither through a play tunnel, and kangaroo hop (jump with two feet together). Kids should cheer on their friends while they wait for everyone to finish.

✂ **TODDLER HACK:** Set up a play tunnel for the kids to crawl through.

- **Was that hard for you?**
- **Did you want to give up?**
- You didn't give up because you could hear your friends cheering!
- Let's say our Big Idea together: **I won't give up — God is with me!**

## PRAYER

- God, thank you for being with us. Even when things are hard, help us remember that we can do it! Amen.

# SHARING TIME

## SNACK | Veggie Straws

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give the children some veggie straws to enjoy. As kids eat, play "[Fruits and Veggies](#)" (Miss PattyCake) or something similar. For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#)
- **What kind of food do you think Daniel and his friends ate to help them be healthy and strong?**
- **What are some of your favorite foods to eat?**
- Daniel and his friends didn't give up when things got hard because God was with them.
- God is with you, too, so you can remember: **I won't give up — God is with me!**

## ACTIVITY | Circle Time

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Pass around 5–7 pieces of play food (preferably healthy). Explain that you will play a song and when the music stops, the foods should stop being passed. Describe one of the foods you've passed and invite the child holding that item to answer a question. Then resume the music and resume play until all of the questions have been asked.
- **Who didn't want to eat the food that was given to them by the king?**
- **What kind of food did Daniel ask for?**
- **What happened after Daniel and his friends ate healthy food for ten days?**
- **What can we do when we want to give up?**
- **Who is always with us?**

## ACTIVITY | Painting With Food

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Set out paper, food that can be used to paint with, and washable paints. Allow the kids to make their own food art. (See a worked example [here](#).)
- ✂ **TODDLER HACK:** For a mess-free option, provide each toddler with the plate printable and fruit and vegetable stickers.

- Daniel and his friends made the right choice, even though it was hard, because they knew it's what God wanted them to do. They could have given up and eaten what everyone else was eating, but they stuck it out because they knew God was with them.
- God is with us too! **I won't give up — God is with me!**

### MEMORY VERSE | Nahum 1:7 (NIV)

- **"The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and he knows those who trust in him."**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Lead the children in saying their memory verse by putting their hands outward around their mouths (like a lion's mane). Invite kids to turn to the left, and repeat the verse after you. Then have them turn to the right, with their hands still around their mouths, and repeat the verse after you again.

## PLAY TIME

### ACTIVITY | Coloring Page

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Print and distribute the coloring page along with crayons or markers. As the kids color, you can review today's Bible story, Big Idea, and memory verse.

### ACTIVITY | Good Eats!

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Set up a kitchen and dining area with play food, utensils, cookware, and costumes, and allow the kids to pretend to cook food for each other.

### ACTIVITY | Vegetable Garden

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Set out a medium-sized bin filled with dried beans and toy food. Provide rakes or scoopers for kids to "plant" and "harvest" the food.