



UNIT 16 | SESSION 3 | MARCH 26

DANIEL SERVED GOD

DANIEL 5

KEY PASSAGE:

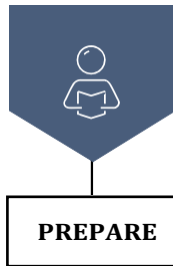
Zephaniah 3:17

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Where is God? God is in all places at all times and is always with His people.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

God humbled the proud king of Babylon by taking away his kingdom. King Jesus willingly humbled Himself by dying on the cross for our sin. God raised up Jesus and gave Him honor forever. When we humble ourselves and trust in Jesus, God will raise us up to enjoy Jesus in His kingdom forever.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



LEADER Bible Study

Daniel 5 contains several notable instances that are reasons to stop, pray, and consider our own lives. One of the most perplexing questions is derived from the words of the queen who entered the scene following Belshazzar's inability to make sense of the writing inscribed on the wall by an unfamiliar hand.

Following the mysterious inscription, the king called in those who would have been culturally identified as experts at explaining and creating the unseen. To Belshazzar's disappointment, none of them could explain the inscription or its meaning.

Then the queen stepped in with a brilliant thought, derived from past experiences. She recommended Daniel, a man who formerly had profound influence and insight and provided this type of help to the previous king—Belshazzar's own relative, Nebuchadnezzar.

Consider the personal challenge that arises at the mention of Daniel's name. It was Daniel's past faithfulness that opened the door for present opportunity. And the natural question that flows from this realization is this: Does my faithfulness today lay the groundwork for future opportunities?

In Matthew 5:13-16, Jesus described His followers as the "salt of the earth" and the

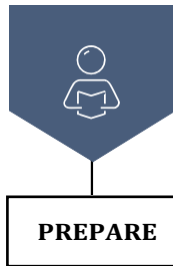
"light of the world." These descriptions of the people of God lend themselves to cultural influence that shows the power, mercy, grace, and goodness of God. And this type of influence always leaves a mark. In Daniel's case, the mark was so significant that it gave greater influence to his witness.

We can't undo the past, but we can be decisively committed to the next step, the next moment, and the next opportunity. What if you committed to faithfulness one day at a time? And what if your faithfulness marked the people around you in significant ways? Then I would imagine that your faithfulness will lead to future opportunities for greater influence.

Don't waste today. Be faithful to your purpose to live as the salt of the earth and the light of the world. And God will use you today and, Lord willing, multiply your efforts and opportunities tomorrow.

PLACES TO KNOW

Babylon: large empire that absorbed the nation of Judah and destroyed Jerusalem. Nebuchadnezzar was the last great ruler of Babylon. Belshazzar ruled after him.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- ☐ "What Does It Say?" activity page

Attendance



LEARN

Worship Sing

"Amazing Grace! My chains are gone"
Additional Song of your choosing

Introduce the Session

- ☐ countdown video

Review the Timeline

- ☐ Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- ☐ "Daniel Served God" video
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ dry erase board and marker (optional)
- ☐ paper crown (optional)

Missions Moment

- ☐ Show Mission Video and Collect offering

Prayer



LOVE

Memory Verse

Review & Bible Skills

- ☐ Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity

- ☐ Humble or Proud

Easter Activity

Continue making Chains

Family Take Home

Remind parents to take a 'Family Discussion Guide' home



WELCOME Kids in mentorship rooms when they arrive

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY “Can you tell me the difference between someone who is proud and someone who is humble? Is it better to be proud or humble? Why?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “What Does It Say?” on the activity page.

SAY “Sometimes it can be frustrating when you cannot understand something you read. In today’s session, we are going to learn about a king who could not understand a message and needed someone to help him understand.”

2 Take Attendance

Keep an eye on the clock – this welcome time so only 10 minutes before you head to Large Group teaching

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

Worship (10 minutes)

Say “There are so many ways to worship God! Today, we are going to worship God with our voices – we are going to sing! Singing is a wonderful way to worship and to focus our minds and our hearts on Jesus. So, let’s sing loud, but no yelling. Today we are going to sing: (Name the songs you are going to sing)

Read Psalm 105: 1-4

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “Welcome kids! My name is **[your name]**, and I am so excited about today’s Bible story! Let’s get ready by taking out our Bibles. Raise your Bible high! **[Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.]** Every week we read from the Bible because the Bible is how we come to know what God has told us about Himself and His plan to rescue us from sin.

Our Bible story today is found in the Book of Daniel. God used Daniel to write this book and to help us know what is true about God’s character, how God worked during Daniel’s life, and how God was working to save people far into the future.”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

SAY “Do you remember our big picture question from last week? **[Allow responses.]** Yes, our big picture question is, **Where is God?** Now, who remembers the answer? **[Allow responses.]** **God is in all places at alltimes and is always with His people.** That means that God is even here with us right now!

Today’s Bible story reminds us that God was even with His people when they were taken away from Jerusalem to Babylon. Remember that the temple was in Jerusalem. Even though God met with His people at the temple, that wasn’t the only place God was present. God is always with His people, wherever they may go.”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “Daniel was taken to Babylon when he was a young man. Remember how Daniel was faithful to God? Daniel chose to obey God’s law and not eat King Nebuchadnezzar’s food. God was kind to Daniel and allowed him to grow in understanding and strength.

In our Bible story today, Daniel had been living in Babylon for about 66 years. In all that time, God was still with Daniel. Let’s read our story to learn how the Lord used Daniel to help the king of Babylon understand a message. ”

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Daniel 5. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Daniel Served God.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

DANIEL SERVED GOD

“ King Belshazzar (bel SHAZ uhr), the ruler of Babylon, had a big feast. A thousand guests came to eat and drink with the king. During the party, King Belshazzar brought out gold and silver containers for his guests to drink from. The containers had been taken from God’s temple in Jerusalem; the king was misusing them. While the king and his guests drank, they worshiped their false gods—gods made of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone.

Suddenly, the feast was interrupted. A hand appeared at the wall, and its fingers began writing a message. The king watched the hand, and he was very afraid! His face was pale, and his legs shook. The king stared at the message on the wall, but he didn’t understand what it meant.

The king called for the wise men in his kingdom. “If anyone can tell me what this message means, I will give him gifts and an important job in my kingdom,” he said. The wise men came, but none of them knew what the message meant. King Belshazzar and his guests were upset.

Then the queen remembered Daniel. Daniel was wise, so Daniel was called to the palace. Daniel saw the message and understood what it meant. The message was from God.

Daniel reminded the king about what happened to his relative, King Nebuchadnezzar (NEB yoo kad NEZ uhr). “God made King Nebuchadnezzar great,” Daniel said. “But King Nebuchadnezzar thought too much of himself, so God punished him.”

King Belshazzar had not learned from Nebuchadnezzar’s mistakes. King Belshazzar did not love God; he loved himself the most and he worshiped false gods.

Then Daniel read the message aloud and told the king what the words meant. The words on the wall were MENE (MEE nih), MENE, TEKEL (TEK uhl), PARSIN (PAHR sin). MENE meant that God had counted the days of the kingdom. The king wasn’t going to be king anymore. The next word, TEKEL, meant that God had given the king a report card, and he had failed. The word PARSIN meant that Babylon would be split up and taken over by its enemies.

That night, God’s message came true. King Belshazzar was killed, and a new king named Darius (duh RIGH uhs) took over Babylon.

STORYTELLING TIPS

Write the message: Use a dry erase board to write the message *Mene, Mene, Tekel, Parsin* when you tell that part of the story.

Wear a crown: Place a paper crown on a kid’s head and tell him he is King Belshazzar. After God’s message comes true, choose a new kid and crown him King Darius.

Christ Connection: God humbled the proud king of Babylon by taking away his kingdom. King Jesus willingly humbled Himself by dying on the cross for our sin. God raised up Jesus and gave Him honor forever. When we humble ourselves and trust in Jesus, God will raise us up to enjoy Jesus in His kingdom forever. ”

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ King Belshazzar had a big party and thought he was the greatest. He used the special containers from the temple in ways that showed He did not love God. These special containers were to be used to serve and worship God. Belshazzar even worshiped idols and led others to do the same.

God gave Belshazzar a message, but Belshazzar couldn't understand it. Who did the queen remember could help the king understand the message? **[Allow responses.]** Yes, she remembered Daniel. God had been with Daniel and had made Daniel wise and able to understand dreams.

Who was the other king of Babylon that thought he was really great too? **[Allow responses.]** King Nebuchadnezzar believed he didn't need God, but God humbled Nebuchadnezzar. God humbled King Belshazzar too. God took away his kingdom and reminded everyone that we need to trust in Him and depend on Him for all things. Only God is to be worshiped and only God holds all power. ”

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “ God humbled the proud king of Babylon by taking away his kingdom. King Jesus willingly humbled Himself by dying on the cross for our sin. God raised up Jesus and gave Him honor forever. When we humble ourselves and trust in Jesus, God will raise us up to enjoy Jesus in His kingdom forever. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Show Mission's Video from the Mangyan Tribe, Philippines

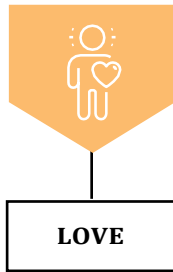
SAY “ I want to ask a question about the video – Did the children in the video look happy or sad? That is correct, they looked happy. Why do you think they look happy? Today, our offering is going to help these kids have a meal. They normally have one meal a day – supper. Let's help them have breakfast! ”

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ God, thank You for Your love for us. Thank You for Jesus and that Jesus was humble. Thank You that Jesus thought of us and died for our sins. Help us ” to listen well to our teachers. Amen.

Move to Small Groups



THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

Memory Verse (5 minutes) (Final week on John 3:16)

Help the kids to memorize the Bible Passage of John 3:16. Read it out loud. Read it again, point at the word having them repeat after you. If they know the passage, have them recite it to you.

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Mediterranean Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Daniel 5. Remind kids that when Daniel went before King Belshazzar he had been in Babylon for 66 years. Help kids understand that even though Daniel was surrounded by idolatry, he still trusted in God. Consider pointing to Babylon (E11) on the Old Testament Mediterranean Map to show where Daniel was in exile.

Choose a volunteer to read aloud Daniel 5:20-21 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud.

SAY “When Daniel read the message on the wall, he reminded Belshazzar of Nebuchadnezzar’s pride. God humbled Nebuchadnezzar and made him know that God is the true ruler over all the earth. There is no earthly king that is greater than God.

We should confess pride and ask God to help make us humble. Pride tricks us into thinking we don’t need God. And we do need God! Only God can save us from our sin and give us life.”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

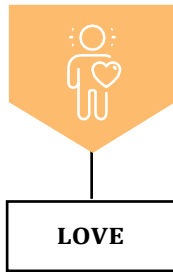
SAY “How did Belshazzar act proudly?”

Remind kids that Belshazzar thought he was so great and that he got his kingdom because of his great power. Remind kids that he also misused the special temple cups that were only supposed to be used to serve God. Help kids understand that Belshazzar also worshiped idols and thought he didn’t need God.

SAY “How was God with Daniel?”

Lead kids to understand that God was with Daniel because God made Daniel wise, strong, and able to understand God’s message. Help kids learn that Daniel’s understanding came from God giving it to him. Encourage kids to remember that through Jesus, God is with us too.





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

SAY 🗣️ *Does having pride really make one great? Why not?* 🗣️

Encourage kids to remember that only God is great. Remind kids that we are sinners and that even our best efforts are stained with sin. Help kids understand that pride is a sin because it puts us against God as we think we do not need God. Encourage kids to remember how Jesus showed humility by dying for us and that we can follow His example as we put others before ourselves. Lead kids to understand that in God's kingdom the humble will be exalted.





Activity

THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

Activity

1 ACTIVITY (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: HUMBLE OR PROUD?



Invite kids to sit on their knees on the floor. Explain that you will say a situation that shows if the person is acting humbly or proudly. Direct kids to place their heads and arms down if the person is humble or stand up if the person is proud.

Consider using the following situations or choose your own:

- A boy bragging about how great his new bike is.
- Helping an elderly neighbor take out her trash.
- Using your allowance to buy a treat for your little sister.
- A kid skipping people in line.
- Letting a kid play with your favorite toy.

SAY “God wants us to be humble because it shows that we think of others before ourselves and want to honor God. Let’s read our Bible story to learn if the king of Babylon was humble or proud.”

Continue building the rings for our Easter Celebration. We need it read for Good Friday – **only 3 more weeks to get it done**

Send your group to the LOBBY to have their hand painted onto the large 16 banner.

When painted, please return to your rooms to wait for parents.

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.