**Daniel Family Worship Devotionals – Week 1**

Could you imagine being ripped away from your family and homeland by a foreign army and then being brought to a thoroughly wicked nation to serve an immoral king? This is Daniel’s life story. And we will be exploring what life was like for him and his friends as we go through the first six chapters of the book of Daniel.

**A Suggestion:** Like the other devotionals we have gone through, each devotion will consist of questions, song suggestions, prayer ideas, and a few words from the selected bible passage. To get the most out of these devotionals, don’t rush through them, but rather, spend time going through each question. Search the scriptures together as a family to seek the answer which is found therein. Also, encourage your family to ask their own questions.

**Day 1 – The Cost of Disobedience (1:1-2)**

*“In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the vessels of the house of God. And he brought them to the land of Shinar, to the house of his god, and placed the vessels in the treasury of his god.” (Daniel 1:1-2)*

The book of Daniel opens with the siege of Jerusalem and the capture of King Jehoiakim (vv. 1-2). Historically this happened in 605 BC. If you want to learn more about this king, you can read 2 Kings 23:36-24:7 and 2 Chronicles 36:5-8.

When talking about the capture of the king, the author makes note that the Lord handed him over to Babylon. God, who is the defender of His people, permitted the defeat and capture of His people. Why did God allow this? Well, for that, you need to go back to the law and the consequences God lays out for breaking it.

***Read Deuteronomy 28:15, 32-33, 36-37, 45-52***

**Questions**

* With these verses in mind, why did God allow for His people to be defeated and captured?
* The nation’s disobedience wasn’t simply for a few months, but for decades. Also, it wasn’t isolated to just a few people, but to the majority of the nation. God continued to warn his people of their sin and the consequences of their continued disobedience. What does this reveal to us about God?
* Sin is not trivial. There are consequences to breaking God’s law. Thankfully, in the New Testament, God has made a way for our sin to be forgiven. He places the judgement of sin upon an innocent substitute who then suffers the penalty of our disobedience. Who is the substitute?

**Song Suggestions**

* In Christ Alone - <https://youtu.be/v72YT0TnAD4> [for kids]
* Have Mercy on Me - <https://youtu.be/CH2A0voHZu8>

**Prayer Ideas**

* Pray that God may show you the seriousness of your sin and the surpassing mercy that He offers in Jesus.

**Day 2 – Taken to Babylon** (1:1-7)

***Read Daniel 1:1-7***

Daniel appears on the scene in this passage as one of the captives taken from Jerusalem and brought to Babylon. The word used for “young men” in this passage literally means “children” or “boys” and probably refers to teenagers. Daniel would have been probably anywhere from 14-17 years old when he was captured and made a servant of Babylon.

We can only speculate as to what happened to his parents. It may be safe to assume that they didn’t survive the siege of Jerusalem. So imagine being a teenager and being ripped from your family and homeland. This would have been devastating, and yet, we will see Daniel’s resolve to live for God.

**Questions**

* In verses 3 and 4 Nebuchadnezzar requests that some of the Israelites from the royal family and nobility be brought and trained by Babylon for the court. The criteria was that they had to be good looking, adept at learning, knowledgeable, perceptive and capable of serving in the kings palace. One of the person’s selected was Daniel (v. 6). What does this teach us about who Daniel was?
* For three years Daniel would be indoctrinated into the Babylonian culture so that he may be able to serve the king (v. 5). What problem could this pose towards his faith in God?
* Daniel and his three friends were not only taught Babylon’s way, but they were given new names that reflected the culture of Babylon (v. 7). Originally their names honored God, now their names reflected the pagan gods of Babylon. Daniel’s name which means “God is my judge” is changed to Beltshazzar which means “Bel protect him”. This was in attempts to separate Daniel, and the others, from their allegiance to the God of Israel. How does the world today try to attempt us to break from our allegiance to God?

**Song Suggestions**

* Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah – <https://youtu.be/WOz3G-L7bFk>
* W-I-S-D-O-M – <https://youtu.be/FPCf7ViZpEU> [for kids]

**Prayer Ideas**

* Pray that God will show you the areas of your life where you are being influenced by the culture around you.
* Pray that God will guard your heart from worldly influences so that you may live for Him.

**Day 3 – Refusing to Compromise** (1:8-16)

In verse 5 we are told that “the king assigned them a daily portion of the food that the king ate, and of the wine that he drank”. Sounds like this would have been a wonderful thing to enjoy. Instead of scraps, they would have the finest food and beverages. However, in the next few verses we find that there was an issue with the food. God had dictated to Israel the food they were permitted to eat and how to prepare it (Lev. 11; Exo. 23:19; Deut. 14). The king’s food was not in accordance to the law, and therefore, to eat it would be to disobey God’s instruction.

Daniel was in a tense situation. On the one hand, to eat the food, they would defile themselves with sin. On the other hand, the consequence to refusing the kings food would have been death. So, how does Daniel respond?

***Read Daniel 1:8-16***

**Questions**

* Before Daniel approached the one in charge over him, he had already “*resolved in his heart* that he would not defile himself with the king’s food” (v. 8). What can we learn from this in relation to obedience?
* As mentioned earlier, there was a potential cost to pay for Daniel’s obedience. In fact, the chief eunuch would have also paid the cost (v. 10). How much are you willing to pay to walk in obedience to God and avoid compromise?

* God blesses Daniel’s obedience by swaying the chief’s heart to allow him to be tested with a different diet for ten days (vv. 9-14), as well as causing them to be healthier in appearance than those who ate of the king’s food (v. 15). What can we learn from this in relation to obedience? (cf. Psalm 119:2; Prov. 16:20)

**Song Suggestions**

* Holiness – <https://youtu.be/2rLpTaAYXfk>
* Trust and Obey – <https://youtu.be/OSWoGIWcvN4> [for kids]

**Prayer Ideas**

* Pray that you will grow in your trust and obedience to God and His Word.
* Pray that God will cause in your heart a resolve to do what is right even if there is a cost involved.

**Day 4 – Advancing in the Kingdom** (1:17-21)

In verse 5 we are told that Daniel and the others “were to be educated for three years, and at the end of that time they were to stand before the king”. In verses 17-21 the three years of education had passed and they were now to stand before the king. What would the king find?

***Read Daniel 1:17-21***

**Questions**

* Daniel and His three friends excelled in every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king inquired of them. In fact, they were ten times better than all the other officials that were in his kingdom. Where did this ability come from? (cf. 17)
* God blessed them with an intellectual ability that far exceeded the other officials. In particular, God gave to Daniel “understanding in all visions and dreams”. How would these gifts be used by God?
* In verse 21 we learn that Daniel would serve in the court “until the first year of King Cyrus”. This would be roughly a timespan of 70 years (basically an entire lifetime!) Though he worked for tyrants he would continue to glorify God in his words and actions. What is the secret to living for God amid a wicked culture?

**Song Suggestions**

* A Christian’s Daily Prayer - <https://youtu.be/vAaFfoQy6s0>
* He Leadeth Me – <https://youtu.be/rpYM6Et_hVY>

**Prayer Ideas**

* Pray that God may show you the gifts you have been given and where he wants you to serve Him.