

Unit 16, Session 1: Daniel and His Friends Obeyed God

Dear Parents,

This week we began a 3session story arc spanning much of Daniel's life. God's people had been warned by the prophets: "Turn from your sin, and turn back to God!" But the people did not listen. The nation of Judah was consumed by idol worship; the kings did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. So God kept His word—He allowed His people to be taken from their land.

Nebuchadnezzar was the king of Babylon, the strong and powerful nation that overtook Judah's capital of Jerusalem and brought God's people from Israel to Babylon. Daniel was a young man in Judah when this happened. He might have heard about the prophet Isaiah's warnings; now he witnessed their fulfillment. (See Isa. 39:57.)

King Nebuchadnezzar called for the best young men from Judah to be trained for service in the palace. Among these teens were Daniel and three of his friends. The chosen boys were given new identities—new names, new education, new culture. But Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah stayed faithful to the one true God and refused to make themselves unclean by eating the king's food.

God blessed Daniel and his friends. Daniel's obedience to God led to his favor with King Nebuchadnezzar, and Daniel's life would be a testament to God's control over all things. God remembered His people during the exile and promised to bring them back to their homeland and set up a new kingdom.

Daniel chose to obey God no matter what, and God blessed Daniel and his friends. In an even greater way, Jesus always obeyed God. He came to earth and followed God's plan to save sinners. Jesus never sinned, but He died the death we deserve. Jesus rose from the dead, and those who trust in Him receive God's forgiveness and blessing.

Help your kids understand that obedience is not always easy, but we trust God to give us strength to obey Him. Point out that Daniel lived about 600 years before Jesus—the perfectly obedient promised One. We can trust that Jesus will return someday to set up His kingdom forever.

Check this session's Activity Page and Big Picture Card as well as the Gospel Project for Kids Family App for ways to interact with the Bible content this week.

FAMILY STARTING POINTS

- How can we obey God? We trust God to give us strength to obey Him.
- Daniel obeyed God by not eating the king's food.

UNIT KEY PASSAGE

- Daniel 2:20-21 (Preschool: Daniel 2:20)

NEXT WEEK

- "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego" (Daniel 3)