



UNIT 16 | SESSION 3

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.



WELCOME Kids

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 “Have you ever been told an important message? What was it about? Who gave you the message?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “What Do You Love?” on the activity page.

SAY “What are some things that you love? God has given us many good things to love. But we should love Him above all. In our story today, Daniel showed that he loved God by serving Him.”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: HUMBLE DEPENDENCE



Form two groups of kids. Provide each group with a large bed sheet. Instruct each group to stand on top of the bed sheet. Explain that they cannot step off the bed sheet and they must work together to flip the bed sheet over to its opposite side.

Guide kids to think about ways they can work together to flip the sheet over. The team to successfully flip the sheet and have kids still standing on it is the winner.

SAY “This activity depended on you working together. Not one of you could flip the sheet alone. This also meant that you had to have humility as you recognized that you couldn’t solve the problem on your own. In a similar way, we show humility when we depend on God. Today, we will learn about a time when the king of Babylon showed that he did not have humility.”

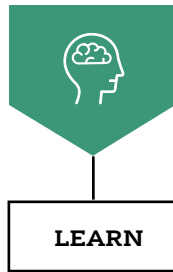
OPTION 2: WALL OF WORDS

Before the session, attach two large sheets of paper or poster board to a wall. Instruct the kids to trace their hand on the paper. Instruct kids to write things they need God’s help with inside their hands.

Ask for volunteers to read what they wrote beside their hand on the wall. Discuss how we all need God’s help.

SAY “In our story today, we’ll see how a hand appeared and began writing on the wall in the king’s palace. Daniel had to interpret the message for the king and the message was that God was going to humble the king. One of the ways we can stay humble before God is to admit our need for Him.”





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

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 “ Hi, my name is [your name]! I’m so glad you’re here with us today. If you brought your Bible, hold it up as high as you can. [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.] The Bible is God’s Word and has been given to us so we can know Him more.

In the past, God spoke to people in other ways. Can anyone think of a way God spoke to people in the Old Testament? [Allow responses.] God spoke to Moses through a burning bush. God spoke to Israel through the prophets. Today, we’re going to learn about another way God spoke to people—a message on a wall. Every time God speaks, we should listen. God’s words are the most important message we will ever hear. ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

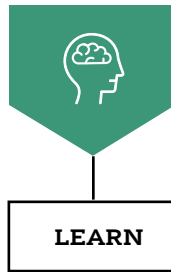
SAY “ Let’s review our big picture question together. Our big picture question is, **Where is God?** Do you know where God is? [Allow kids to respond.] **God is in all places at all times and is always with His people!**

Today’s Bible story reminds us that God was even with His people when they were taken away from Jerusalem to Babylon. God made Himself known to not only Daniel, but also to the king of Babylon. Even when people, like the king of Babylon, do not acknowledge God, God’s presence is still in all places at all times. We will learn that God was with Daniel and gave him wisdom to help the king understand an important message. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

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

SAY “ Jeremiah warned God’s people that because of their sin they would be taken away to Babylon. God’s Word came true and the king of Babylon destroyed Jerusalem and took some of the people away in exile. One of the people who was taken away was Daniel. Last week, we learned that Daniel chose to be faithful to God and obey Him even in a foreign land. Today, we will learn how God continued to be with Daniel and used him to help the king understand a message. ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

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

Use props: Create a feast using props such as grape juice, various foods, and metal containers.

Change voices: Use different voices to distinguish between the different characters in the story.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

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 was a very proud man. The feast he had was in celebration of his kingdom and his greatness. He even invited 1,000 people to celebrate with him! What did King Belshazzar fail to understand? [Allow responses.] The king should have known that he is not great, only God is great. Everything the king had was a gift from God.

God used Daniel to help the king understand the message from God. What did the message say? [Allow responses.] Daniel told the king that his time as king was over. King Belshazzar had failed as king and the kingdom of Babylon would be taken over by its enemies.

There is no king like King Jesus. Jesus never failed and He never will. Jesus, the one true King, humbled himself by dying on the cross for our sin. No other king could have done that. Jesus’ kingdom is not an earthly kingdom, but a heavenly kingdom and His reign will never end. Open your Bibles to Revelation 19:16. [Ask a volunteer to read the verse.] Jesus is the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. When we humble ourselves and trust in Jesus, we will enjoy Jesus in His kingdom forever! ”

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 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 16, Session 3” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Why does God tell us to be humble? What does this mean?
2. How was Jesus humble?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

SAY “ There are more than 300,000 South Asian people living in British Columbia. God called Shahid (shuh HEED) Kamal and his wife Maroofa (mah ROO fah) to start a multi-language church



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

for the large number of South Asian people in the Vancouver area. The South Asian people in the area speak Punjabi, Hindi, and Urdu. Many South Asians come to the church in Vancouver to request prayer. The church has an opportunity to tell them about Jesus while they pray for their requests. ”

Show the missions video. Then explain to the kids that many of the South Asian people living in Vancouver are from religions that believe in many gods. Tell kids that the Kamals and the church want the people to know there is only one true God. Tell the kids that the people in the church often do prayer walks through their communities.

Pray for the Kamals and the believers of South Asian Community Church as they tell people about the one true God and His Son, Jesus.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Zephaniah 3:17 together.

Instruct the kids to stand in a circle. Choose a kid to stand inside the center of the circle. Lead the kids in the circle to say the key passage but clap in place of one of the words in the verse. Ask the kid in the center of the circle to say the missing word. Repeat several times, choosing a new kid to stand inside the circle each time.

SAY “ Isn’t it amazing to know that the God who created the heavens and the earth and who loves us rejoices over us with gladness and delights in us with singing! God not only promises to always be with us, but He delights to be with us. What an amazing God! ”

Lead kids to sing “The Lord Your God (Zephaniah 3:17).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ Lord, we love You. Thank You for loving us and proving Your love by sending Jesus to die on the cross for our sin. You are always good, and You are always there. We praise You for Your faithfulness. Amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**

