

Lesson 5

Captured!

Daniel 1:1, 2; 2 Kings 24:1-16; *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 479-490

Imagine what it would be like if you suddenly had to leave your home. If you could not take anything with you. What if you had to leave your family? Daniel had to leave everything behind. It happened a long time ago . . .

The people of Judah had forgotten about God again. Many chose to break God's laws and worship idols. But a few people still loved and worshiped the true God. Daniel's family was among them.



When Daniel was born, his parents gave him a special name. They wanted to remind him always to be loyal to God. Daniel's name means "God is my judge." His parents wanted him to know that it did not matter what people around him did or said. The only thing that really mattered was whether God would be happy with what Daniel did. As he grew up, Daniel decided to live for God. He put God first in everything he did. God came first in his everyday chores and in bigger things. Daniel wanted to be a servant of God, just as Samuel had been.

Daniel lived in Jerusalem, the capital city of Judah. King Jehoiakim also lived in Jerusalem. The king did not worship God. He encouraged the people to worship idols. He built beautiful temples to these idols. And he led the Hebrew people in celebrating those idols' holidays. Daniel decided that no matter what happened, wicked King Jehoiakim could not force him to do wrong. Daniel was not alone. He had three friends: Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael, who also wanted God to be first in their lives. After King Jehoiakim died, his son Jehoiachin became king. He also did not worship God.

While Daniel and his friends were still young, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon attacked Jerusalem. He quickly

The Message

I serve God when I help my friends make good choices.

Memory Verse

“I have chosen the way of faithfulness; I have set my heart on your laws”

(Psalm 119:30, NIV).

defeated the Hebrew army and entered the city. His army captured King Jehoiachin and his family. They went into the temple Solomon had built and took away many golden treasures. As the soldiers went through the city, they took anything they wanted from people's homes.

King Nebuchadnezzar took many prisoners back to Babylon. Among them were Daniel and his three friends. They were taken away from their families into a foreign land. Though torn away from home and family, they encouraged each other. Together they decided that when they arrived in Babylon, they would live for God. They would help each other make right choices.

Upon arriving in Babylon, the four were given new names. Daniel became Belteshazzar; Hananiah was named Shadrach; Mishael became Meshach; and Azariah became Abednego. These new names honored foreign idols, idols they would not worship.

Daniel had lost his home and his family. He had even lost his name. What did he have left?

Much.

Nebuchadnezzar and all his armies could not take God away from Daniel. Daniel had chosen to serve and love

God, and God was with Daniel no matter where he was. Daniel had everything he needed: a loving God and good friends to encourage him.

God would remember Daniel and his three friends. He had a special work for them to do. God wanted Nebuchadnezzar to learn about Him. These four Hebrews would lead the way. They would teach the king about the God of heaven.



S A B B A T H

READ

Read Daniel 1:1, 2 with your family. Discuss what it would be like to be taken away from your family to live in another country.

ASK

Ask each member of your family what they value most. How would they feel if someone came and took it? How did the Hebrews feel when Nebuchadnezzar took precious things from the temple?

DRAW

Draw some of the treasures that Nebuchadnezzar may have taken from the temple. Pray that God will help you to put the right value on things.

S U N D A Y

DO

Make a paper chain. Write one word of the memory verse on each link, including the reference. During worship, teach your memory verse to your family.

THINK

Talk about how Daniel and his friends were taken away as prisoners. What did they think? How did they survive? What would you have done?

PRAY

Pray for people who are in prison because they love Jesus.

King Nebuchadnezzar's army destroyed Solomon's temple when they attacked Jerusalem.

M O N D A Y

MAKE

Make a card for someone who needs encouragement.

DO

If possible, go for a walk with some friends. Or call a friend. Discuss ways to help one another make good choices. Thank God for your friends.



T U E S D A Y

DO

Look in the newspaper or watch the news. Are there any wars today?

READ

Read and discuss 2 Kings 24:1-16 together during family worship. How many people did Nebuchadnezzar take to Babylon?

DO

Find out how many people live in your town. How does this compare with the number of people Nebuchadnezzar took to Babylon?

PRAY

Pray that God will help your country's leaders to make good and wise decisions.

W E D N E S D A Y

ASK

During worship, ask your parents to tell you about their friends when they were your age. Did their friends help them choose to follow God?

READ

Find and read about two friends in the Bible who helped each other.

PRAY

Think of a way you can help or encourage a friend today. Pray that your friend will make good decisions today.

T H U R S D A Y

SHARE Daniel and his friends were given new names when they arrived in Babylon. Think up a new name for each member of your family. Share them at worship time and tell why you chose that name.

DO Write a letter from Daniel to a friend back in Jerusalem and share it during worship.

SING Sing "This Little Light of Mine" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 134).

PRAY Thank God that you are His child, and that He can use you to help your friends. Pray for people who are struggling to make right decisions.

F R I D A Y

DO Daniel's name means "God is my judge." Try to find out what your name means. Ask your parents why they chose your name. With your family, act out the story of Daniel and his friends going into captivity.

SING Sing "Dare to Be a Daniel" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 116) before prayer. Then invite God to help your family encourage others to make wise choices.

Captured!

PUZZLE

Directions: The following clues refer to people and places in this week's lesson. Write the answers on the lines to find a special name in the vertical box.

1. Jerusalem was the capital city of this country.
2. Prophet of the Lord that Daniel admired.
3. The friend of Daniel whose name began with an "H."
4. Daniel's friend whose name began with "A."
5. Daniel's third friend.
6. The city to which Daniel and his friends were taken.

