

INTRO

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INTRODUCTION

When you hear that a person has lived ‘*a life of faith*’, what do you think of?
Is this a positive expression or a negative one?

Generally speaking, do you think that people who try to honour God in their everyday lives can or will become successful? Give reasons for your answers.

Do you know anyone who has made it a priority to serve God throughout their whole life?
Talk about this person and how others see them.

What are the challenges of trying to live a life that honours God in everything a person does?
Make a list.

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-
-
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Do you think that there is a place for God in the workplace or the government?
Should there be limits?

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CHAPTER 1

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1. Do you know any children? Talk about the things children do that make people smile.
Talk about the things children do that make people frustrated.

2. What kind of child were you? (check all the answers that are true for you)

- a) obedient: listened to and did what your parents asked
- b) strong willed and often disobedient: doing what you wanted
- c) able to see where you were wrong and willing to change your ways
- d) generally got into trouble by doing the same “bad” thing over and over again
- e) quick to apologize
- f) unwilling to apologize
- g) felt badly for a long time when your parents were disappointed in you
- h) moved on quickly from parents being upset with you

3. Do you think people grow out of bad habits or behaviour?

Give reasons for your answers

4. Talk about the emotions you feel if you know you have disappointed the following people:

- a) your parents
- b) your spouse or a very close family member
- c) your children or a very close friend
- d) your boss or leader of a group you belong to
- e) God

5. Are you a person who forgives other people easily, or does it take time for you to get over being angry?

6. Would you say that you learn easily from your mistakes or the mistakes of others or that you learn the hard way?



photo by caleb roenigk

repeat

repent

attack

capture

stole

temple

pagan

surrounded

bless

fought

prisoners

slaves

commanded

strict

sample



by James Joseph Tissot



DANIEL - WHAT'S FOR DINNER?

Nebuchadnezzar had a brutal name to pronounce AND spell! He was also the rich and powerful king of Babylon. (You've heard of the amazing hanging gardens of Babylon? Well this is the King that built them!) He was like so many people who have so much, he wanted more, so Nebuchadnezzar attacked Jerusalem.

Let's go back in history. God would bless the Israelites but they would soon forget God's love and mercy and would do stupid things like worship idols, statues and false gods. Then God would punish them. They would repent and God would bless them again. This history would repeat itself again and again.

We begin our story at the point in history where Israel is in a strong rebellion against God again. No good! So God decided to let the King of Israel see just how "powerful" his idols and statues were. When the King of Babylon attacked Israel, God didn't help them. Israel was destroyed. It was really bad this time.

King Nebuchadnezzar's army surrounded Jerusalem. They fought for a year and a half until Babylon finally captured the city. The Babylonians stole the valuable gold and silver treasures used for worship in God's temple. They also captured thousands of people and dragged them all off to Babylon. The Israelites were prisoners and slaves in a foreign, pagan land.



photo by Peter Grima

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1. How do you think the Israelites felt now?
(They weren't just prisoners, they were taken away from their country.)
2. What do you think? What are the characteristics necessary for a person to serve in a royal palace? Make a list.

Does your list look similar or different to the list given in the story?



photo by eyesplash

King Nebuchadnezzar ordered his chief official, Ashpenaz, to look for the best and the brightest young Israelite men. They were observed, interviewed and hand-picked to serve in the King's court. The candidates had to be intelligent, well-built and good-looking; qualities worthy of serving the King.

Ashpenaz chose the finest young men from all of the captured Israelites. Four of those chosen were Daniel and his three friends: Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.

These young men were taught to read and write the Babylonian language, and were educated in Babylonian traditions and culture. Of course, they had to stay fit and strong. King Nebuchadnezzar told Ashpenaz that the candidates should eat the same kind of food he ate, food fit for a king.



photo by matt reinbold

THE CHALLENGE

1. With your partner create a menu that you think would be fit to serve Prince William and his wife Kate. Be prepared to present your menu to the class.

Menu

sample

2. If nobody forced you, stopped you or gave you their opinion on what food would you choose to eat EVERY day? Why?
Is this something good and healthy or more in the junk food category?
3. Have you ever been trying to control your eating (such as being on a diet) and then someone came along with some delicious-looking food? How did you feel?
What did you do? Was it easy or difficult?
4. Were your parents strict or relaxed about what you ate as a child?
What about now - who controls what you eat, when you eat and where you eat?
5. There's an expression in English that says, "You are what you eat."
Do you agree or disagree with this?
If people are what they eat . . . draw a picture of yourself as food.



photo by xavi talleda

That was a problem for Daniel and his friends. You see, God had told the Israelites what they should and should not eat to keep them healthy and strong. Of course, King Nebuchadnezzar didn't know or care about God's laws. Daniel had already made up his mind. He wasn't going to eat the King's forbidden food.

To the Babylonians, the King's food was rich and delicious, but to the Israelites, it was like eating garbage. Daniel decided he and his friends were only going to eat what God had commanded. God was pleased with Daniel. Daniel asked Ashpenaz to help him with his food problem, but Ashpenaz was afraid. He said, "The King has told me what you are to eat. What if you get sick or don't look as healthy as the others? The King will kill me!"

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photo by martin cathrae

Daniel offered Ashpenaz a plan. "Let my friends and I eat what God has commanded us to eat. Give us only vegetables to eat and water to drink for the next ten days. Then, compare us with the others who have eaten the rich palace food and decide for yourself who looks healthier."

After 10 days, Daniel and his friends were healthier and stronger than the ones who had eaten the rich food and wine from the palace kitchen. From that day forward, Ashpenaz let Daniel and his friends eat the foods commanded by God.

THE CHALLENGE

LOOK AT THE PARAGRAPHS BELOW AND MARK THE ORDER 1, 2 AND 3 TO FINISH THE STORY.

Paragraph A _____

Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were appointed to the king's royal court. They were given Babylonian names. Daniel became Belteshazzar, Hannaniah became Shadrach, Mishael became Meshach and Azariah became Abednego. Everything that happened was all part of God's plan to show the greatest king in the whole world who the REAL King is.

Paragraph B _____

The young men began their studies and God blessed them and gave them great success in everything they did. He also gave Daniel a special gift. Daniel could tell the meaning of dreams. Daniel and his friends were faithful to God - and God was faithful to them.

Paragraph C _____

After three years of training, no matter what question the king asked or what problem he gave them, the four young Israelites knew ten times more than anyone in the whole kingdom, including the king's magician and advisors.

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1. What was the purpose of choosing some of the best young men from Israel?
2. If you were Daniel and his friends, how would you feel eating only vegetables when everyone else was eating rich palace food and wine?
Did their decision “pay off”?
In other words, did they make a good decision that had good results?
3. What do you think motivated Daniel and his friends to not eat the rich foods?
4. Daniel and his friends risked being sent to jail or being killed by disobeying the orders of the King and the wishes of the palace official. They stood up for what they believed in.
Do you know anyone who has personally stood up for what they believed in?
Have you ever stood up for something you felt strongly about?

This story is a great example of young men willing to take a stand for their convictions. It is also an example of using a positive strategy. In this situation, refusing to eat the food was not possible.

The official in charge was in danger of losing his life if anything went wrong with the training of these young men. But Daniel and his friends did not rebel, refuse, or complain. Instead, they proposed an experiment to satisfy the concerns of the guard.

Often we can use positive strategies such as experiments, trial runs, simple tests, or creative ideas that allow us to keep our integrity while thinking about the legitimate needs and concerns of others around us.

5. This proposal to do something positive rather than refusing showed that Daniel and his friends were wise for their age. Do you have any examples of positive strategies that you have used or that have been used on you?
6. What is the difference between cultural taboos and spiritual convictions?
7. In what areas have you seen people follow cultural pressures and go against spiritual convictions? What advice would you give those people?

THE CHALLENGE

DRAWING CONCLUSIONS FROM THE TEXT:

Our text doesn't say why God allowed Nebuchadnezzar to capture the Jewish King. Any guesses why God would allow that to happen?

CHOOSE THE BEST ANSWER.

1. The Israelites were in a time of (*revelation/rebellion/revolution*) when they were (*captured/captained/carried*) and taken to (*Boston/Babylonian/Babylon*).
2. The Babylonians (*steal/stoled/stole*) the valuable things from God's (*temple/treasure/throne*).
3. The Babylonians were considered (*pogans/pigeons/pagans*) because they worshipped statues.
4. Even though Daniel and his friends were offered the best food from the palace, they were still (*poisoners/prisoners/prisms*).
5. If you speak clearly, you don't have to (*repent/report/repent*) yourself.

sample

Use these words to create a short story: attack, capture, repeat, surrounded, fought, prisoners

USE THE FOLLOWING WORDS
TO COMPLETE THE SENTENCES:

captures repeating fought repent surrounded

1. The woman became nervous when she was _____ by a large group of teenage boys.
2. God is willing to forgive us when we _____.
3. The best way to remember new vocabulary is by _____ it and using it often.
4. A photo _____ a moment in time.
5. The two dogs _____ until their owners separated them.

EXPLAIN THE DIFFERENCE (IN ENGLISH) BETWEEN:

a prisoner and a slave
attack and capture
repent and forgive

sample

MATCH COLUMN A WITH COLUMN B

Shadrach	the King of Babylon
Abednego	Daniel
Beltshazzar	Hananiah
Meshach	a pagan nation
Nebuchadnezzar	Azariah
Babylon	Mishael

THE CHALLENGE

Why do you think the young men's Hebrew names were changed to Babylonian names?
Do you know anyone who has changed their first name?

FOR BLANKS 1-5 CHOOSE THE BEST WORD EITHER A, B, OR C

Daniel and his friends (1) _____ for what they knew to be right.
They (2) _____ followed God's dietary rules. After ten days
(3) _____ their special diet, Daniel and his friends looked
(4) _____ than the other young men. They also had more
(5) _____ and intelligence than the others.

1. a) stood against b) stood up c) stood tall
2) a) strictly b) of following c) have stuck
3) a) following b) of following c) followed
4) a) healthier b) healthy c) healthier
5) a) wiser b) wisely c) wisdom

sample

REALITY CHECK

Look at the scale below. Where do you see yourself?

1	2	3	4
Daniel was stupid and should have enjoyed good food when he had the chance.	I see that it worked for Daniel but he doesn't live in this generation. It just won't work.	I would like to be like Daniel, but I don't have the discipline.	I see that it paid off for Daniel and I would like to try to be disciplined like him.

sample

CHAPTER 2

sample

RIVERS OF BABYLON

by Brent Dowe and Trevor McNaughton

By the rivers of _____, there we sat down
Ye-eah we wept, when we remembered _____.

By the rivers of _____, there we sat down
Ye-eah we wept, when we remembered Zion.

When the _____
Carried us away in _____
Required from us a song
Now how shall we sing the Lord's song in a _____ land

When the wicked
Carried us away in _____
Requiring of us a song
Now how shall we sing the Lord's _____ in a _____ land

Let the words of our _____ and the meditations of our heart
Be acceptable in thy sight here tonight

Let the words of our mouth and the meditation of our _____
Be acceptable in thy sight here tonight

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down
Ye-eah we _____, when we remembered zion.

By the rivers of _____, there we sat down
Ye-eah we wept, when we _____ Zion.

By the rivers of Babylon (dark tears of babylon)
There we sat down (you got to sing a song)
Ye-eah we wept, (sing a song of love)
When we remember Zion. (yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah)

By the rivers of Babylon (rough bits of babylon)
There we sat down (you hear the people cry)
Ye-eah we wept, (they need their god)
When we remember Zion. (ooh, have the power)

sample

THE CHALLENGE

Psalm 137

We were sitting by the rivers of Babylon.

We cried when we remembered what had happened to Zion.

2 On the nearby poplar trees
we hung up our harps.

3 Those who held us as prisoners asked us to sing.
Those who enjoyed hurting us ordered us to sing joyful songs.
They said, "Sing one of the songs of Zion to us!"

4 How can we sing the songs of the Lord
while we are in another land?

5 Jerusalem, if I forget you,
may my right hand never be able to play the harp again.

6 If I don't remember you,
may my tongue stick to the roof of my mouth so I can't sing.
May it happen if I don't consider Jerusalem
to be my greatest joy.

Psalm 19:14

14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my
heart be acceptable to you, O Lord,
O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.



photo by barackschloss



1. What is the mood of the musicians?
2. Why do their captors demand songs?
3. Why is remembering Jerusalem so important to these people?
4. What is something or someone you never want to forget?
5. Have you ever experienced deep, deep sadness?
Were you pressured to act like there was nothing wrong?
Why is it so difficult for the captives to sing happy songs?
6. Have you ever felt like a foreigner in a strange land?
7. How can slaves have any hope in their lives?

sample

CHAPTER 3

sample



1. Do you think that dreams have some hidden meaning?
2. Do you dream often? Can you remember your dreams?
Do you dream in Polish, English or another language?
Do you dream in black and white or in colour?

sample



a dream
a nightmare
magicians
sorcerers
advisors
interpret
clever
sweating
a reward
disappoint

DON'T WORRY, IT WAS JUST A DREAM!

It woke him up in the middle of the night several nights in a row; he had hardly slept at all. "This dream must mean something," he thought. He did what kings did back in those days long ago. He sent for his magicians, sorcerers and advisors.

King Nebuchadnezzar sat high on his throne and the magicians, sorcerers and advisors stood before him. They were probably already beginning to sweat.

King Nebuchadnezzar said to them, "I keep having this dream. Tell me what it means."

"O Mighty King, may you live forever!" said the magicians, sorcerers and advisors. "Tell us your dream, and we will tell you what it means."

But King Nebuchadnezzar was a clever king.

He said to the magicians, sorcerers and wise-men, "Tell me my dream first and THEN tell me what it means."

Now the magicians, sorcerers and advisors were really sweating. "How can we do that?" they asked. "Tell us your dream, and then surely we can tell you what it means."



photo by dave leeming

The King said, "If I tell you my dream, how will I know you are not just making it up when you tell me what it means? Tell me my dream and what it means and I will give you all a great reward. But if you cannot, I will have you torn to pieces." Now these magicians, sorcerers and advisors were nervous. After all, you don't want to disappoint a mighty king - especially one who hasn't been sleeping well!

The magicians, sorcerers and wise-men begged the king, "But, Your Majesty, please, tell us your dream first. No one can know another man's dreams except God alone." At least they were right about that!

"You cannot do it?" said King Nebuchadnezzar, "Very well then." And he ordered that all the magicians, sorcerers and advisors in his kingdom be torn to pieces.

sample

Wouldn't you know it, Daniel and his friends had been appointed to the king's court just in time to be torn to pieces! When Arioch, the chief of the guards, came for them, Daniel asked him, "Why is the king being so harsh?" Arioch explained the whole situation to Daniel.

Daniel said to him, "Don't tear anyone to pieces just yet. Give me a little time, and I will tell the king his

dream and what it means." Daniel got together with his friends and they prayed, "Dear God in heaven, please help us. Tell us the king's dream and what it means."

And God did just that.

That night Daniel had a vision, and in it God told him the king's dream and what it meant.



photo by c jill reed

Again, Daniel prayed to God,

“Praise God in heaven, He is wise and wonderful!

He has power over all things.

He sets the time of the seasons.

He sends the rain in spring,

the hot sun of summer,

the cool air of fall,

and the snow in winter.

He puts kings on their thrones.

Their power comes from him,

and he can take it away whenever he wants.

He knows all things.

It is God who makes us wise.

Even the darkest secrets aren't hidden from Him because

He is light.

I praise you, the God of my family. You have made me
strong and wise, and you have answered my prayer.”

sample

PUT THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS IN THE CORRECT ORDER TO CONTINUE THE STORY.

They all fit in the story. Mark them 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 to show the correct order.

_____ “That’s it!” cried the king. “You’ve told me my dream.

No one could have known without God telling them.”

_____ Daniel told the mighty King EVERY detail of his dream from the beginning to the end.

_____ “WHAT?” screamed the king, “then what are you doing here?”

_____ “No magician, sorcerer or wise-man can tell you your dream or what it means,” Daniel continued, “But there IS a God in heaven who can. And he has told me what to tell you.”

_____ The next day Daniel appeared before mighty King Nebuchadnezzar.

He said to the king, “I can’t tell you your dream or what it means....”

1. Have you ever had the same dream more than once? Was it a good dream or a nightmare? Did you wonder if the dream had some significance to it?

“Now I will tell you what it means,” said Daniel. He interpreted the King’s dream, even the parts that weren’t so nice for the King to hear.

King Nebuchadnezzar fell to the ground.

He knew that this was a message from God. He said to Daniel, “Now I know that your God is the ONE TRUE God, the one who knows all mysteries, and THE King who rules over all the kings of the earth.”

King Nebuchadnezzar rewarded Daniel with many wonderful gifts. Then he made Daniel the head of all the royal advisors. Daniel asked that his friends, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah be rewarded also, and so King Nebuchadnezzar put them in charge of all the affairs of Babylon.

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Even though people who didn’t follow God surrounded them, Daniel and his friends were faithful.

And God was with them.

And it’s a good thing that God was with them because of what was about to happen to these young men next!



photo by tony misfit

1. Tell your partner about a crazy dream you had. What do you think it meant?
2. If someone told you they could interpret your dreams, would you listen to them?
How far would you go, would you follow instructions they gave you?

THE CHALLENGE



STOP! CAN YOU SUMMARIZE THIS STORY IN 4 SENTENCES?

Remember to ask yourself these basic questions:
Who did what? Why? What happened?

Now write your summary:

PICK ONE OR TWO

1. How would you describe the King's dream?
a) happy b) disturbing c) unimportant d) terrifying
2. How would you describe the advisors' reaction to the King's request?
a) peaceful b) laid back c) anxious d) wild
3. How would you describe Daniel's reaction to the King's request?
a) calm b) anxious c) inquisitive d) bored
4. How would you describe the King's reaction to Daniel's explanations?
a) angry b) humble c) sincere d) wild

MAKE A PREDICTION:

What do you think will happen to Daniel and his friends?



1. Have you ever been asked to give an answer for something that you knew nothing about?
How did you feel?
2. Do you think King Nebuchadnezzar made an unreasonable request of his advisors?
Give reasons for your answers.
3. Have you ever been in a difficult situation where you began to sweat? What happened?
4. When did Daniel pray to God?
5. Why did Daniel pray a 2nd time?
What are some of the things he prayed about in his 2nd prayer?

sample

What do these things have to do with Daniel's first prayer?

6. Look at the King's response to Daniel's interpretation of the dream.
What do you think of King Nebuchadnezzar's character?
7. Do you think Daniel's interpretation of the dream will change King Nebuchadnezzar?
8. How do you think the other advisors are feeling about Daniel and his friends?

EXPLAIN THE DIFFERENCE (IN ENGLISH) BETWEEN:

- a sorcerer and a magician
- a dream and a nightmare
- a prediction and an interpretation

THE CHALLENGE

FILL IN THE BLANKS USING THESE WORDS:

disappointed sweat interpret nightmare clever

1. When Jeremy was a teenager, he would often wake up screaming because he had had a terrible _____.
2. I was so nervous when my boss called me into his office that I began to _____.
3. Julie was quite _____ and solved the teacher's riddle and won the prize.
4. We need someone to _____ what the lady in the office is saying. She doesn't speak English.
5. Mom was quite _____ that you forgot to call her on her birthday.

CHOOSE THE CORRECT FORM OF THE WORD FOR EACH OF THE FOLLOWING SENTENCES.

1. (disappoint)
We need to teach our children that they will have many _____ in life.
2. (reward)
Helping the people whose homes were destroyed in the flood was a _____ experience.
3. (advisor)
The school is having terrible financial trouble, we need to organize an _____ group to help us plan for the future.
4. (sweat)
Jim was _____ so much during his run today that he had to stop to buy a bottle of water.
5. (interpret)
Judges must give a good _____ of the law.

USE THESE WORDS IN A SENTENCE:

advisor _____

reward _____

disappoint _____

REALITY CHECK

Look at the scale below. Where do you see yourself?

1	2	3	4
I don't think so! Visions are NOT possible.	Cool story, but that was then and this is now.	I think God can give people visions. but not me!	I'm open to God speaking to me if He wants.