

DANIEL IN EXILE

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies center on Bible stories that have rich meaning that can have an impact on your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading this Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, then go through it from a teacher's perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with you group, and ones you want to change or omit.

As always, continue to encourage your students to give their full attention while engaging with this story. Remind them that discussion outside of the parameters of the story is for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie, allowing themselves to enter it, they will learn things they never have before.

In Chapter 18, the story centers on two of the most well-known "scenes" in the Old Testament: the story of Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego; and the story of Daniel and the lion's den. These should present some accessible themes for your students--encourage them, whenever possible, to find ways to connect the meaning of these stories to their own lives.

NOTE: During the StoryReaders telling and following discussions, you may need to help your students with pronunciation of the names Shadrach (Shad'rack), Meshach (Me'shack), Abednego (A'bed'ne'go), and Nebuchadnezzar. (Pronounced neb'u'kud'nez'ur.)

"Daniel in Exile" can be found in:
Daniel 1-3; 6; Jeremiah 29-31

Encourage your students to think about practical application for their lives.

Through a study like this, it is necessary to be continually reminding your students--and yourself--to be thinking about what these stories mean for their everyday lives--for their relationships, their work, their school, for their church, and for their steps toward spiritual growth.

While several of the discussion questions are aimed at connecting these themes with students' lives, it can be easy, at times, for students to address these stories on more theological or theoretical levels than on a personal, practical one.

One way to ensure that students are continuing to connect their lives to the story is to follow up with them--either during the week or in the next discussion, as time allows. If it is helpful, try to write down notes for yourself soon after the discussion, in order to help you remember what each student is wrestling with in his or her life. (Try not to take notes during the discussion, as it may communicate that you are not fully engaged.)

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TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 18 Handout: Daniel in Exile** (on curriculum DVD).
- 9-12 Copies of the **StoryReaders Script** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReaders Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for students that would like to read along.
- Copies of the *Join the Story* Sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- Show **The Kingdom's Fall Recap video** and the **Daniel in Exile video** from the curriculum DVD.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, and clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** Popular used magazines and newspapers (1-2 per participant), one large piece of paper or poster board for every 3-4 participants, scissors, glue OR tap.
- **Optional:** THE STORY FOR TEENS—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan.

StoryReaders Assignment:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a student to read!** Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

The StoryReader scripts are segments of scripture taken directly from Zondervan's THE STORY BIBLE FOR TEENS (TNIV). Each script takes 10 minutes or less to be read aloud. These segments have been formatted into a *Readers' Theater*. A Readers' Theater is an activity in which a few participants are asked to read directly from a script, with the intent of telling a story in a lively manner. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise** from the script, but use voice inflection and some gestures appropriate to their characters actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

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You may also institute a "so what?" question at the end of each discussion time. This can be an intentional time for each student to share the part of the story that they will most be "taking away" from the time together. You could ask questions like "What will you be thinking about when your head hits the pillow tonight?" or "In response to the story, how will your life look different this week?"

If students know that they are expected to give an answer, they may be more likely to find direct takeaways from your time together.

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS:

1. TWO LENSES

- Using copies of the StoryReaders scripts (or the actual passages from the Bible), have students read the selection quietly on their own. Have them read it with this particular question in mind: *What stands out to you as most important or most unusual in this story?*

- When they finish, have the students read the story again. This time, have them focus on the question: *What does this story mean for your life?*

- Encourage students to take notes of things that stood out to them during each reading.

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ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS

For each lesson, three additional storytelling options have been suggested, in order to provide some optional variety to your students' experience of the scripture. You may use them to either supplement or replace the Readers Theater experience. For each of the three options, you may either use the StoryReaders script provided or have students read directly from scripture. (Scripture references are noted at the top of the StoryReaders script.)

NOTE: Additional Storytelling Options may take longer than the allotted 10 minutes, depending on the type of exercise and number of students.

ANOTHER CREATIVE OPTION

A story-specific idea for an additional creative exercise has also been provided with this lesson. You may use and adjust the instructions for the exercise (see the "Creative Option" sidebar under the "JOIN THE STORY" section of the Teacher Lesson Script) to fit the needs of your group.

(Please note that additional materials may be required for this exercise, and the exercise may take longer than the allotted time for the JOIN THE STORY section, given the type of activity and the size of your group.)

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS CONTINUED

2. RE-TELLING THE STORY

- Divide students into 2-3 groups, depending on the length/complexity of the story and size of your group. Assign a different part of the story to each group. Have each group read their part of the story amongst themselves.
- After 3-5 minutes, have members from each group re-tell what happened in their section of the story in front of the rest of the large group. Encourage them to recount as many details from the story as they can.
- OPTIONAL: Encourage group members to act out what happens while the story is being re-told. For a fun element, limit re-tellings to 1 minute each, so that students are forced to do a fast-paced reenactment.

3. STORYBOARD

- Divide students into groups of 3-4. Have each group read through the StoryReaders script within their groups.
- At the front of the room, hang 6-8 large pieces of paper. After 10 minutes, have one volunteer at a time (one from each group) come up and draw a major "scene" from the story on each large piece of paper. (Encourage students to use stick figures--just enough to represent what is happening in the scene.)
- When the storyboard outline is complete, review the series of events and ask the students to share if they feel that any major events from the story have been left out.

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes:

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY (<i>large or small group</i>)	5 minutes
Introduction and prayer	1 minutes
<i>The Kingdom's Fall Recap</i> Video	2 minute
Brief responses to video	2 minutes
PART TWO: SEE THE STORY (<i>large or small group</i>)	10 minutes
Explanation and handouts	1 minute
<i>Daniel in Exile</i> Video	3 minutes
Creating symbols for the story	2 minutes
Sharing about our symbols	4 minutes
PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY (<i>large or small group</i>)	25 minutes
Explanation	1 minute
StoryReaders scripture telling	12 minutes
Response to scripture	7 minutes
<i>BREAK: teens move to small groups</i>	5 minutes
PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY (<i>small group</i>)	35 minutes
Discussion	15 minutes
Create responses to the story	10 minutes
Sharing responses to the story	5 minutes
Closing prayer	1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

5 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Welcome, everyone! I'm glad that you're back this week for another great time of looking at God's story together. Whether this is your first time with us or you have been here throughout the story thus far, I hope that we will all get something exciting and new out of our time together. We have some great activities to get to today, but first let's pray before we begin:

God, Thank you for this amazing group of people that is with us today, each of us with our own unique story. As we come together, I ask that you would remove any distractions from our heads and our hearts, so that we may hear what you have to say to us through today's story. Help us to discover how each of our stories intersects with yours--and give us a better picture of how we can live the way you want us to. Amen.

In today's story, we're picking up where we left off last week. But before we do, let's take a look back at what happened last in the story. As always, this recap will move pretty fast, so be sure to watch and listen carefully.

[CUE: Play *The Kingdom's Fall Recap* video from the curriculum DVD (2 minutes)]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

So what did you think of that video? What parts stood out to you? Was there anything that you had forgotten about?

[Get a few quick responses to these questions, don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hopefully, this video has helped to remind you of what last happened in the story, or to fill you in if you weren't with us. I have another video that will give us a quick look at where our new story will take us this week. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Now, let's watch this week's video, *Daniel in Exile*. As always, the video will move pretty quickly, so you'll have you pay attention--you won't want to miss anything. Ready?

[CUE: Play the *Daniel in Exile* Video from the curriculum DVD (3 minutes)]

[CUE: Give each student the *Chapter 18: Daniel in Exile* handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an image or symbol for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In a couple of minutes we will share our creations.

[CUE: DISCUSS – After two minutes, ask a few students to share a briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind what they were drawing. After three or four minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES**Teacher SCRIPT** (please personalize this):

As usual, there's a lot to take in from this story. We want to spend some time diving deeper into it, so I have asked a few of you to help us as *StoryReaders*.

While the story is being read, I encourage you to draw or write key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the *StoryReaders* script all the way through without stopping. (10 minutes) NOTE: For alternate ways of interacting with the text, see the "Additional Storytelling Options" section under *TEACHER PLANNING*.]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: DISCUSS –After two minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:]

–What were the key events from the story?

–What was most meaningful to you from this story?

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: send students into **small groups.** Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN THE STORY segment of this study.]

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY**35 MINUTES**

[CUE: DISCUSS – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

- Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story handout. Would anyone like to share what you came up with?
- What stood out to you from the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego?
- Who do you think was with them in the furnace?
- What do you think it took for them to defy the king's orders?
- What might God's protection of them tell us about God?
- Why do you think Daniel continued to be open about his faith and prayers?
- How is God calling you to "defy" the expectations and norms of today's culture?
- What issues are difficult for you to take a stand on because everyone else seems to think differently than you do?

Teacher Script:

Pick ONE of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- *Which character or part of the story did you see yourself in?*
- *Have you ever been picked on for doing the right thing and obeying God?*
- *How did this story challenge or inspire you to live differently?*

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

I hope one of these questions will give you something to think about and create. If you're having trouble coming up with something, try choosing a method of responding that you haven't tried before. Sometimes it helps to mix it up and respond to God in new ways! In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses. I am really excited to see what you come up with!

[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

CREATIVE OPTION:

Divide students into groups of 3-4. Give each group 4-6 magazines OR newspapers, a piece of paper OR poster board, scissors, glue OR tape, and markers. Tell the students that each group is going to create a collage based on the things that our culture calls us to worship.

Say something like: "Just as the main characters in today's story were faced with difficult decisions about who they should bow down and worship, so do we have that same difficult decision every day. There are many things in our culture that vie for our allegiance and--in essence--our worship. You are going to have the next 10 minutes as a group to look at these magazines and newspapers for examples of things that have the potential to come in the way of our worship of God. Cut them out and glue/tape them to your group's piece of paper/poster. Try to fill up your paper/poster with as many meaningful images as possible."

After students have had about 10 minutes to complete their collages, invite groups to briefly share some (or all) of the items on their collage. OPTIONAL: Once all the groups have finished, attach all the collages together, creating one large collage that may be displayed in the space where your group meets, as a reminder of the "idols" of our world.

[CUE: SHARE – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

You all continually amaze me with the way you think about and respond to these questions. Thank you so much for putting yourself out there and sharing your great insight with the rest of us. Keep it up! I wish we had more time to continue our sharing, but we can look forward to the next part of our story next week!

Let's pray as we end our time:

God, You are a God who is worthy of being worshiped. You give us everything we need--and more--and we cannot thank you enough. We are also thankful that you are faithful to remain with us as we try to choose you every day. Thank you for coming into the fire with us when things get really tough and for protecting us. Please help us to continue to trust you and to remain faithful to you and the plans you have for us. Amen.