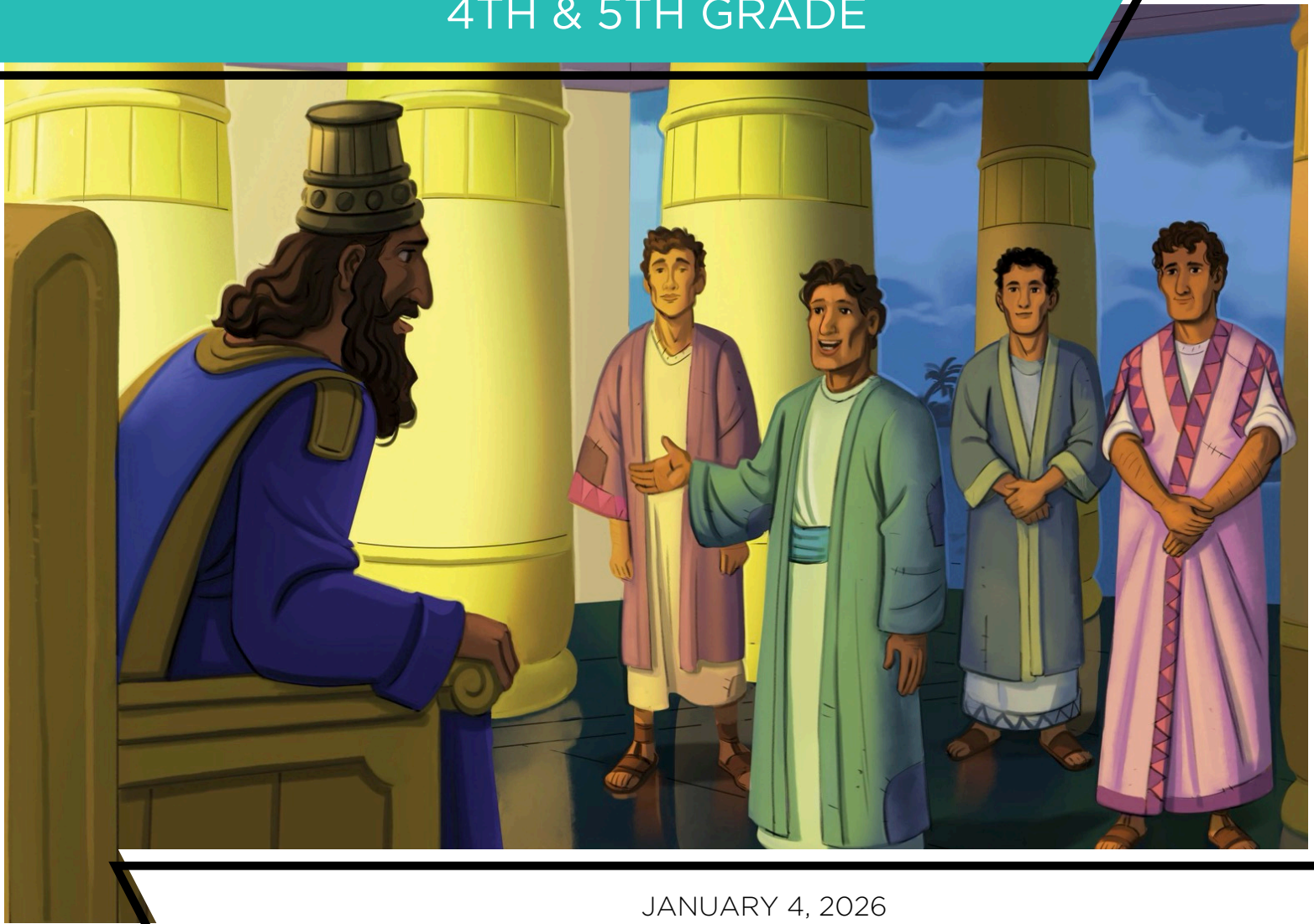


PRETEEN MINISTRY

4TH & 5TH GRADE



JANUARY 4, 2026

DANIEL OBEYED GOD

DANIEL 1

CHRIST CONNECTION

Daniel was faithful to obey God, even in the small **matters** like eating the correct foods. Jesus was faithful to obey God in every way. When we trust in Jesus as Savior, God credits us with the perfect life Jesus lived.

LEADER DEVO

Some see Daniel as a book filled with epic adventures and fascinating prophecies—yet the heart of Daniel’s narrative goes much deeper. At its essence, Daniel is a survival guide, a bold blueprint for thriving in a world that’s hostile to those who place their faith in the one true God.

Daniel and his friends found themselves in a situation far removed from what they may have expected for their lives. Their people had been captured by the leading power of their day, the Babylonians. God’s people were exiled from their home to a foreign land where they would face severe persecution as they boldly lived out their faith in God.

What made this nation such a hostile environment for these young men? First, Babylon had a godless king who was known for murdering his enemies and those who defied him. Secondly, Daniel and his friends were forced to receive a Babylonian education that focused heavily on religious practices directly in contrast to their own, including a strong emphasis on astrology and the occult. These young men were not just to be removed from their homeland; rather, they were to be transformed into followers of the Babylonian way of life.

Imagine for a moment the pain of being removed from the only place you have ever known, isolated from friends and family, and inundated with daily teachings that contradict your fundamental beliefs. How would you react?

Daniel and his friends reacted with humble obedience. Even in the seemingly small matters, like eating the correct foods, Daniel and his friends desired to obey God and remain faithful to Him. Daniel and his friends decided they would stick to the diets prescribed in the Law instead of indulging in the king’s food, regardless of the consequences. Like Jesus in His time of temptation, Daniel and his friends realized that “man does not live by bread alone.” These young men trusted God to honor their obedience, and that is exactly what God did by giving them wisdom beyond their years.

As you teach kids this story, help them see how obedience to God is always better than following the ways of the world and how Jesus provides Christians with the Holy Spirit to help them obey God. Remind kids that we can glorify God in the small everyday choices we make and in everything we do.

ARRIVAL

When kids arrive, they can play in the game room, Large Group room, or the balcony area. They can go between the areas as they want until Large Group starts. Leaders should be spread out in these areas to watch kids. Use this time to interact with kids and build relationships with them. Ask them about their week, big events coming up, or follow up on a prayer request from the week before.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY

THIS MONTH'S MEMORY VERSE

So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

1 Corinthians 10:31



NEXT BIBLE BUCKS DAY

JAN 25

There are many techniques and tools to help kids (and you!) memorize Scripture.

THIS MONTH'S TOOL: POST-IT NOTES

Write the verse out on a Post-it note and put that note somewhere you'll see often, such as a bathroom mirror, the fridge door, etc. Every time you see the note, read the verse aloud 2-3 times.

LESSON

When Jehoiakim was king of Judah—before Judah was destroyed—God allowed King Nebuchadnezzar (neb yoo kad NEZ uhr) to attack Jerusalem and win. He brought back some of the treasures from the temple and some of the strongest and smartest young men from the royal and noble families to be servants in his palace. The king planned for these young men to be trained in the ways of Babylon and learn its language. He wanted them to become part of his nation.

The young men were to be trained for three years, and then they would serve the king. One of the young men who was captured and brought to Babylon was named Daniel.

Daniel knew that the food the king had provided him to eat went against God's commandment. So, Daniel asked permission from the king's chief servant to eat something else. The chief servant liked Daniel, but he was afraid of the king. "What if he sees you looking less healthy than the other young men?" the chief servant said. "The king might punish me!"

Daniel said, "Please, test us for ten days. Let me and my friends eat vegetables and drink water, so that we do not disobey the law of our God. Then examine how we look compared to the other young men and decide based on what you see." The guard agreed to this test.

At the end of ten days, Daniel and his friends who ate vegetables and drank water were better and healthier than all the other young men. So, the guard continued to allow them to eat only what God had commanded.

God rewarded these young men for their obedience. He gave them knowledge and understanding in every kind of writing. He also gave Daniel the ability to understand visions and dreams. When the king saw all the young men, he found Daniel and his friends to be far superior to the rest and appointed them as his attendants. In every matter that the king consulted these men about, he found them ten times better than all the other advisors in his kingdom.

CHRIST CONNECTION

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SMALL GROUPS

OUR GOAL

To create opportunities that invite preteens to discover for themselves what it means to own and live out their faith.

DISCUSSION / APPLICATION

- 1) Why should we be obedient to God even in matters that seem small and inconsequential?
- 2) What are some situations you might be faced with doing something that doesn't honor God?
- 3) How can you stand firm in your faith even when it will make you different than everyone else around you?
- 4) What are everyday examples of how we can obey God and glorify Him?
- 5) How can our obedience to God point others to Him?
- 6) Read Daniel 1:8. What is Daniel's motivation for not eating the king's food? Is he seeking a blessing from God or trying to earn God's favor?
- 7) How is obeying God to honor Him different than obeying Him to earn something?
- 8) How can you grow in your knowledge and love of God so that you want to obey Him?

PICK UP

After small group, kids can play in the game room, Large Group room, or the balcony area. They can go between the areas as they want until they are picked up. Leaders should be spread out in these areas to watch kids.

Use this time to interact with kids and follow up on any questions or discussions from small group time.

As parents arrive upstairs, direct them to the game room, Large Group room, or balcony to pick their kids up. Make sure to match their security code with their kid's name tag and remove the name tag before they leave!

CLEAN UP

- Put away any supplies used during small group.
- Turn off TVs and lights in the small group rooms.
- Turn off both air hockey tables and put away extra pucks or paddles.
- Gather any balls or other items left out in the game room and put them away in the correct bins.
- Put away any games, books, or supplies in the balcony area.
- Check for any items left behind by kids and put them in the lost and found.

THANK YOU FOR SERVING!